

Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson This Issue (12 Cents)

# AINSLIE'S

THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS



# Bright Hours



every hour and every spot that

# SAPOLIO

touches is *bright*. A hundred uses for it indoors, outdoors, in city, country or seashore homes. The stable, garage and yacht all need it. Works Without Waste

**CLEANS SCOURS POLISHES**





## Grand opera at home

Home is more comfortable than an opera house, and a better place to enjoy the magnificent voices of the greatest opera stars.

You can bring to your own fireside for an evening's entertainment on the Victor, the leading artists of the world's most famous opera houses.

Think of the pleasure of hearing such a talented group as Caruso, Calvé, Dalmores, Eames, Farrar, Gadski, Gerville-Réache, Homer, Journet, Martin, McCormack, Melba, Plançon, Schumann-Heink, Scotti, Sembrich, Tetrazzini, Witherspoon and Zerola whenever you want, without going a single step away from home.

These celebrated artists not only sing solos and duets for you, but such famous concerted numbers as the Sextet from Lucia, the Quintet from the Meistersinger, the Quartets from Faust, Rigoletto and Bohème, and the Trios from Faust and Madame Butterfly.

Go to the nearest Victor dealer's and he will gladly play this beautiful Victor music for you. Ask specially to hear the great Duet from Madame Butterfly (89043) sung by Caruso and Scotti—a splendid example of the wonderful results secured by the new Victor process of recording.

**Victor Talking Machine Co., Camden, N. J., U. S. A.**

Berliner Gramophone Co., Montreal, Canadian Distributors.

To get best results, use only Victor Needles on Victor Records.

And be sure to hear the  
**Victor-Victrola**



New Victor Records are on sale at all dealers on the 28th of each month.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# October Ainslee's

**"THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS"**

---

If you have not been reading the serial story which is now running in AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE, you ought to begin it so that you can properly enjoy the installment in the October number. This brings the story to its most exciting point. It is "*The Golden Web*," by

## ANTHONY PARTRIDGE

It was begun in the July number and you should not miss a single line of it.

Besides this story, the October number will contain a charming complete novel by

## ROBERT RUDD WHITING

who contributes his first story to AINSLEE'S.

There will also be a long list of short stories and you ought, for your own sake, to read every one of them. There is not one in the whole table of contents that is not distinctly above the average, and you will find in them no greater variety in theme, atmosphere, and characters anywhere.

**E. F. Benson, Samuel Gordon, J. W. Marshall, Adele Luehrman, Alice Prescott Smith, Jane W. Guthrie, Owen Oliver, Mrs. Luther Harris, Lola Ridge, Carey Waddell, Morgan Robertson, E. M. Jameson and Charles Neville Buck** are some of the contributors.

In the October number the articles on music and the theatres will be resumed, and there will be another of **H. Addington Bruce's** articles on "*Adventurings in the Psychical*."

---

**15 CENTS PER COPY**

**\$1.80 PER YEAR**

**AINSLIE MAGAZINE CO., NEW YORK**



## Were You Ever Born?

If so, see the great Fortune Telling feature coming soon in *LIFE*. Everybody on earth is interested in this. Your future at stake unless you obey that impulse and lead the cheerful Life.

### *The Coming Numbers*

*Goody Goody  
Hell  
Humorous  
Sky  
Midnight*

#### TWO WAYS:

Send One Dollar and secure a three months' trial subscription. (Canadian, \$1.13; Foreign, \$1.26. Open only to new subscribers. No subscriptions renewed at this rate. This offer is *net*.)



Or,

Better send Five Dollars for one Year. Canadian, \$5.52; Foreign, \$6.04. Address

*LIFE*, 16 West 31st St., N. Y.

*One-Hundred-Page Numbers of LIFE in the Near Future.*

# California Oil

The San Francisco Evening Post, the largest afternoon newspaper on the Pacific Coast, will issue on September 3rd a great hundred page Special Edition adequately and accurately portraying by pen and picture California and its limitless resources. Mines, forests, grazing, wool, dairying, wines, fruits, nuts, cereals, fish and manufactures are all fully considered.

The most extraordinary feature of this Edition will be a 32 page color section devoted exclusively to Oil, California's greatest industry. This section will be profusely illustrated with pictures of its great gushing oil wells, refineries, pipe lines, oil steamers and maps of the fields, including several unusually interesting views of the marvelous Lakeview Gusher, the most remarkable oil well the world has ever known, it having produced over five million barrels of oil in four months. The oil business of California has grown within a few years from insignificance to an industry that represents today intrinsic valuation of over

## Five Hundred Million Dollars

and is even now only in its infancy. "The story of this marvelous growth, the men who have grown with it and the countless fortunes made through it, will be told for the Post by men who have been in its midst for years. The story makes one of the most interesting chapters of America's commercial development, and should be read by every progressive American.

If you want the full, authentic story of the California Oil Industry, write today for a copy of this great September 3rd Special Edition of the San Francisco Evening Post, which will be mailed to you **ABSOLUTELY FREE** upon request.

**Circulation Manager, Evening Post**

729 Market Street

San Francisco, California

## ONCE RICH, BUT DIED POOR

**Former Banker and Mayor Ended Life as a Garbage Burner.**

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich., Feb. 21.—Martin L. Sweet, former banker and prominent business man, and once Mayor of Grand Rapids, died suddenly today, on the 36th anniversary of his birth.

Mr. Sweet, who had been prominent in the milling and elevator business of the State, built Sweet's hotel here, founded the bank now known as the Old National Bank and at one time had large lumber interests. Unfortunate operations, however, swept his fortune away and at the time of his death he was employed at the city garbage incinerating plant at a small salary.

Had this man at age 60 invested \$10,000. in an ANNUITY in the National Life Insurance Company, he would have enjoyed, during every year of the remainder of his life, an annual income of \$944.90 and have received for the \$10,000. invested a total sum of \$24,567.40.

At age 65 \$10,000. will secure an annual income of \$1,135.20.

At age 70 \$10,000. will secure an annual income of \$1,364.60.

Have you taken thought for your advanced years and provided beyond all peradventure against such an occurrence as is related in the above clipping; if not, had you not better write at once for income that \$1,000. will secure at your age? Give date of birth.

Annuities written on both male and female lives at any age without examination.

## NATIONAL LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY, OF VERMONT

ORGANIZED IN 1848.

ASSETS \$46,413,036.65.

**MAKLEY & GSELLER, General Managers,**

**149 Broadway, NEW YORK.**

Tell the substitute: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

## LEARN TO WRITE ADVERTISEMENTS

If you will study advertising by mail with this school you can positively increase your earning power. Ad writers receive from \$25 to \$100 a week. Send for our beautiful prospectus; it tells you how free  
**PAGE-DAVIS SCHOOL, 910 Page Bldg., Chicago**  
or 150 Nassau St., N. Y.

## LEARN PLUMBING

A trade that will make you independent for life. Hours shorter—Pay bigger—Demand greater than most any trade. You need no previous experience. Our practical methods enable you in a few months to hold position as skilled plumber or conduct your own business. Catalog sent free.

**St. Louis Trades School**

4474 Olive St.

St. Louis, Mo.

**BIG  
PAY  
SHORT  
HOURS**



## BE A TRAVELING SALESMAN

—or Saleswoman and earn from \$1,000 to \$5,000 a year, and your Expenses. No former experience required. We will teach you to be an expert Salesman or Saleswoman by mail in six to eight weeks and our Free Employment Bureau will assist you to secure a good position where you can earn while you learn and pay for your tuition out of your earnings. We cannot begin to supply the demand of leading business houses in all parts of America for our students. If you want to enter the best paid, most independent profession in the world, write to-day for our handsome free catalog. "A Knight of the Grip," also testimonial letters from hundreds of students we have recently placed in good positions; list of positions now open, and full particulars of the special offer we are now making new students. Address our nearest office, Page 184

**NATIONAL SALESMEN'S TRAINING ASSOCIATION**  
CHICAGO NEW YORK MINNEAPOLIS ATLANTA KANSAS CITY SAN FRANCISCO

"Of all sad things of tongue or pen,  
the saddest are these, it might have  
been."  
Carroll.

# THE GRAPES OF WRATH

BY  
EMERSON  
HOUGH

A splendid, dashing  
romance of the  
Southwest by the  
famous author of  
"54-40 or Fight"  
and "The Mis-  
sissippi Bubble."

WE take great pleasure in announcing that  
the newest novel by Emerson Hough  
will begin in the first October number of

TWICE-A-MONTH  
*The Popular  
Magazine*

*"The only magazine whose readers demand its  
publication twice a month."*

On sale on all news stands September tenth

# Baker's Breakfast Cocoa

Has a Delicious Flavor  
and High Food Value



Registered U. S. Patent Office

Apart from its delicious flavor, which alone would make it a popular beverage, Baker's Cocoa possesses in a marked degree many other good qualities which contribute to its enormous value as a perfect food drink;—it is absolutely pure and wholesome and it is easily digested; made in accordance with our recipe it furnishes the body, as no other drink does, with some of the purest elements of nutrition combined in proper proportion, and it has all the strength and natural rich, red-brown color of the best cocoa beans, carefully selected and scientifically blended.

The success of Baker's Cocoa has been so great that many unscrupulous imitations have been put upon the market, and consumers should see that they are furnished with the genuine article with the trade-mark of "La Belle Chocolatiere" on the package.

A handsomely illustrated booklet of Choice Recipes sent free.

*52 Highest Awards in Europe and America*

**WALTER BAKER & CO. Ltd.**

*Established 1780*

**DORCHESTER, MASS.**



# AINSLIE'S

## THE MAGAZINE THAT ENTERTAINS

VOL. XXVI

CONTENTS

No. 2

FOR • SEPTEMBER • 1910

Cover Design	Clarence F. Underwood	
Foreign Exchange. Complete Novel	Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson	1
I Take Your Love. Poem	Helen Lanyon	48
Woman Proposes, Man—? Short Story	Anne Warner	49
The Lilac Sea. Poem	Clinton Scollard	54
To Study Art. Short Story	Ethel Watts Mumford	55
The Golden Web. Serial	Anthony Partridge	58
In Season. Poem	Martha McCulloch Williams	77
A Meditation. Short Story	H. F. Prevost Battersby	78
Adventurings in the Psychological. Essay	H. Addington Bruce	85
The Chance. Short Story	Mrs. W. K. Clifford	94
In the Vice President's Car. Short Story	Carey Waddell	108
Sorrow and Love. Poem	Helen Lanyon	117
The Greatest of These. Short Story	Margaretta Tuttle	118
Phyllis Puts Up Her Hair. Short Story	Owen Oliver	129
On Guard. Short Story	Charles Neville Buck	134
The Supreme Test. Short Story	Jane W. Guthrie	146
My Confidential Friend. Short Story	Margaret Busbee Shipp	153
A Run on the Bank. Short Story	Alden Arthur Knipe	162
The Singers. Poem	L. E. Johnston	168
A Rose-colored Quest. Short Story	Alice E. Allen	169
As to Other Worlds. Poem	John Kendrick Bangs	171
For Book Lovers. Essay	Archibald Lowery Sessions	172
The Disciples. Poem	Theodosia Garrison	176

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION \$1.80

SINGLE COPIES FIFTEEN CENTS

Monthly Publication issued by AINSLEE MAGAZINE CO., Seventh Avenue and Fifteenth Street, New York.  
 ORMOND G. SMITH, President; GEORGE C. SMITH, Secretary and Treasurer, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City.  
 Copyright, 1910, by Ainslee Magazine Co., New York. Copyright, 1910, by Ainslee Magazine Co., Great Britain. All rights reserved.  
 Publishers everywhere are cautioned against using any of the contents of this Magazine either wholly or in part.  
 Entered September 11, 1902, at New York as Second-class Matter, under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879.  
**WARNING**—Do not subscribe through agents unknown to you. Complaints are daily made by persons who have been thus victimized.  
**IMPORTANT**—Authors, literary agents and publishers are kindly requested to note that the Ainslee Magazine Co. only receives  
 MSS. for consideration on the understanding that it shall not be held responsible for their accidental loss from fire or  
 any other cause while in its office, or in transit.



## How to Get Leaf Lard

Some women are still having trouble in getting real leaf lard so we, again, want to point out the way.

It is this: Simply see that the label says plainly, "Leaf Lard," just as it's said on the label above.

If the next lard you buy bears the "Simon Pure" label you have the very best of leaf lards—a lard made in open kettles from leaf fat just as our mothers used to make leaf lard.

But our lard is even better than hers because of our matchless facilities, our

materials, and our years of experience.

Use it in place of butter. It doesn't cook so dry.

See how flaky, "light" and digestible it makes pies, biscuits, doughnuts, etc.

Famous chefs use Armour's "Simon Pure" Leaf Lard simply because they know nothing else like it.

No woman who tries it will ever be without it.

It costs but a trifle more than the ordinary, but you need use only two-thirds as much.

---

Try it next time. Don't say merely,  
"lard" or "leaf lard" to the grocer, say—

***Armour's***  
"Simon Pure"  
**LEAF LARD**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# AINSLEE'S

VOL. XXVI.

SEPTEMBER, 1910.

No. 2.



## CHAPTER I.

**P**ERCHED high up on the brow of a hill, the historic château of the Savergne family, from time immemorial the most distinguished in the south of France, was an imposing pile of granite with its turrets and towers and oddly shaped medieval windows. And not less imposing were the broad, well-kept, and, now, highly remunerative acres of the domain that stretched out around and below it.

Far different had been the case some seven or eight years before. Then the estate, château and all, had been mortgaged to the last cent, and there was barely enough to provide a meager living for the elderly Prince De Savergne, his sister, the Duchesse De St. Maur, and her son, Comte Victor De Savergne, who were the only surviving members of the family. Then, as at the wave of a fairy's wand, the transformation took place. Comte Victor went to America, on the usual errand of penniless European aristocrats, and Dame Fortune was propitious. He met there a Miss Nancy Baxter, the youthful and charming daughter of Ira J. Baxter, a multimillionaire.

Miss Nancy had all the romance and enthusiasm of extreme youth, and was

easily captivated by the good looks and really irreproachable manners of the count. The young man's suit was vastly aided by Nancy's mother, who was dazzled by the luster of his coronet, and whose matronly bosom swelled with pride at the thought of being able to allude to "my daughter, Madame La Comtesse De Savergne."

And so they were married; and Nancy, fresh, unspoiled, full of roseate visions of the future, returned with her husband to take up her residence in France, and to rehabilitate the fallen fortunes of the great family. This latter was done even to the satisfaction of the critical and exacting prince, for the dowry presented to Ira J. Baxter's only child had been almost royal in its magnificence. The château was restored to its former glory, and the impoverished acres made to blossom luxuriantly.

All this was most gratifying to the haughty heart of the Prince De Savergne, head of the illustrious house, and yet there was a fly in the amber. The prince's thin lips were drawn into an ominous straight line, and his shaggy brows contracted in a frown above his close-set, beady black eyes as he paced restlessly up and down the terrace of his ancestral home, reviewing the situation. Oh, the absurdity of

American ideas, the irritating qualities of the American temperament! What more could Nancy Baxter have expected? Was she not one of the greatest ladies of France, the mother of a boy who was the heir to all these high distinctions? And yet, because Victor, like all men of his age and station, had his little affairs of love, she needs must rise in revolt and protest in a scandalized fashion. Good heavens, was she herself not as free as air? What right had she then to complain, so long as Victor conducted himself in a prudent manner and there was no open scandal? Not for a moment would the prince himself have countenanced the latter; there must be no smudge on the family scutcheon. But so long as Victor's flirtations, peccadillos if you will, were conducted in a decorous manner, and strictly *sub rosa*, at least so far as the general public was concerned, he was acting thoroughly within his right. This had been the code of the family for generations, and now this foreigner, with her absurdly primitive, vulgar ideas as to her rights as a wife, must needs step in, and threaten, so to speak, to throw all the fat in the fire. It was aggravating in the extreme.

But, after all, was not he, the head of the family and the arbiter of its fate, capable of coping with the situation? Yes, his niece-in-law should be taught her position and her duties in that state of life into which she had married; and this desirable consummation should be attained, even if, in the end, he had to resort to extreme measures. At this thought the prince's face cleared as if by magic, and a slow, sardonic smile, born of the certainty of ultimate triumph, wreathed his pale lips.

Suddenly his attention was diverted by the palpitating whirl of an automobile, which in a moment or two died away, and was succeeded by the confused murmur of excited voices.

Prince De Savergne advanced to the edge of the low stone parapet, which encircled the terrace, and, bending forward, looked over. Halfway up the winding, picturesque avenue which led

to the heights upon which the château was enthroned, a machine had evidently broken down under the difficulties of the ascent. About this were gathered three people—two men and a woman. One of the men was undoubtedly the chauffeur, forced to listen to the oburgations and reproaches of his employers.

The other man was small, with a clean-shaven, keen, but rather nervous-looking face; while the woman, very fashionably dressed, was stout, florid, and with a determined manner, which, even at a distance, was easily discernible. The prince, who had gone to America for his nephew's wedding, knew them at once. They were the parents of the young countess, Mr. and Mrs. Ira J. Baxter. More annoyance! For the prince was not quite sure what their attitude would be toward their daughter's senseless and fancied grievance. Moreover, they had not been expected until to-morrow. Another American idiosyncrasy to arrive ahead of time! Well, he must make the best of it; and, with a shrug of his shoulders, he turned and entered the château. There need be no hurry in welcoming these intruders.

Fifteen minutes or so later, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter reached the terrace, both puffing and blowing, and manifestly the worse for the enforced climb. With them, however, was now another whom the prince had not seen as he surveyed the group. This was a man of about thirty, trim, intelligent-looking, clean-shaven, and evidently an American. He wore an old, broad-brimmed, dark felt hat, a brown corduroy jacket, a negligee shirt, and black velvet trousers tucked into high black boots. His general appearance was that of a man somewhat careless, but not untidy, and there was no question of his being a gentleman.

Mrs. Baxter sank panting into a chair and began to fan herself violently, while her husband, mopping his brow, addressed the young man.

"Well, it was great luck for us, running across you," he said heartily. "We'd never have managed the turn-

ings of that avenue without you as a guide. I didn't suppose there was an American within a hundred miles when this machine broke down. What did you say your name was?"

"Hardy."

"Oh," broke in Mrs. Baxter eagerly, "are you one of the T. Featherly Hardys, of Waterbury and New York?"

"I'm afraid not," smiled the young man. "I came from Minnesota."

There was an instantaneous change in the expression of Mrs. Baxter's rather too full face, which, however, still showed the traces of former beauty.

"Oh, from the West," she said somewhat frigidly.

"Well," remarked Baxter good-naturedly, "I guess you'd call me a New Yorker for the last twenty years or so, but we came from Northern Iowa."

"When Mr. Baxter says we, he means his own family," interposed Mrs. Baxter quickly, with a vexed glance at her husband. "I was born a Pinney!"

"Indeed," said Hardy politely.

"Doubtless you know what that means in Poughkeepsie," with conscious pride.

Hardy made no response to this, but turned to Mr. Baxter, who was gradually regaining his breath.

"As it seems you're safely here, I think I'd better get back to my work."

"No, you don't," cried Baxter, seizing him by the arm; "not till somebody comes that can talk English. I have had my experience with these foreigners. They can't understand a word I say. You live in this neighborhood?"

"I've rented an old tower just over yonder for the season, and made it into a studio. I'm an artist, you know. The tower belongs to this estate, by the way—to the Prince De Saverigne."

At the mention of this name, Mrs. Baxter beamed.

"The prince is my daughter's uncle by marriage," she deigned to inform him expansively. "Isn't he the most charming man?"

"I've no doubt," replied the artist vaguely. "I haven't met him."

"Oh, you dealt with an agent, of course?" And then, as Hardy nodded: "I can't imagine the dear prince coming down to details of business."

At this Baxter gave a slight start of surprise.

"You can't?" he cried. "Details of business! Why, he——"

But his wife, with a quick appreciation of what he was about to say, cut him off without compunction.

"He came over to the States when my daughter married his nephew, Count Victor," she vouchsafed to Hardy. "In fact, he was there some time before the wedding, assisting in the—arrangements."

Baxter gave vent to a half chuckle, half groan.

"Assisting!" he repeated. "I should say he did! Why, first he wanted me to give 'em——"

"My dear," interrupted Mrs. Baxter hurriedly, "I'm sure you haven't observed that lovely view off to the right there." And, as Baxter turned, puzzled, to look in the direction indicated, she continued to Hardy, with smiling condescension: "No doubt you remember hearing of my daughter's wedding to the Count De Saverigne?"

"I read of it."

"One could hardly pick up a paper without seeing our names in the most atrocious headlines," Mrs. Baxter's tone was plaintive. "It was excessively annoying, but I felt that I should bear any sacrifice to have my daughter take her place in the—the real society of the world. An alliance with the De Saverignes! Yes, of course, you know what that means?" Hardy bowed mechanically. "Both Count Victor, my son-in-law, and his uncle, the prince, are the very essence of the aristocracy, and the dear Duchesse De St. Maur, Victor's mother, a real 'blue blood' of the old nobility, a great beauty once. Well," with a sigh of satisfied pride, "it is no wonder my daughter is the happiest woman in the world."

Hardy was distinctly bored, but he was too well bred to show it.

"I'm sure she must be," he agreed politely.

"She's got a mighty neat-looking place here," observed Baxter, coming into the conversation again.

"You see, we've never been at the château before," explained Mrs. Baxter. "I've been over several times, but always stopped with them in Paris."

"I've never seen my daughter since the wedding," complained Baxter, and his shrewd though kindly eyes dimmed a little. "Too busy to get over. Why, I've a grandson here, Nancy's boy, I've never set eyes on yet!"

"Mr. Baxter is rather inclined to think of himself first," remarked his wife apologetically. "My only thought was for my daughter's happiness."

"I'd like to see that boy!" persisted Baxter wistfully.

At this moment, a thin, pale, solemn-looking man, dressed in rusty black, appeared from the château, and approached the little party, bowing profoundly.

At Baxter's request, Hardy, who spoke French as well as he did English, proceeded to interrogate the newcomer, and then imparted the result of the conversation to his companions.

"He is the prince's secretary. It seems that your daughter did not expect you until to-morrow. She is not at home now, but will be here soon. He says that the Prince De Savergne is here, and the Duchesse De St. Maur. He'll tell them you've come. He says also that your rooms are ready for you if you wish to go to them first."

Mrs. Baxter eagerly assented. Their luggage had been sent on ahead, and she was anxious to appear in properly gorgeous attire before her noble connections in marriage. So, after renewed thanks to Hardy for his kindness, she went into the château, preceded by the secretary and followed by Baxter, still protesting that he wanted to see his grandson.

Hardy stood for a moment, surveying the exquisite landscape outspread before him. The distant Pyrenees were tinted with the first flush of approaching evening, the shadows had deep-

ened, and the lights were golden down in the woody valleys below. It was a sight to gladden his artistic soul, but it would not do for him, a stranger, to linger long.

He walked to an opening in the parapet, where a flight of stone steps led to the avenue. He had not proceeded a dozen paces when he perceived coming toward him a stout, fair, wholesome-looking woman of middle age. She was dressed in the regulation costume of the French maid—black dress, white cap and apron, with linen cuffs and collar.

As she raised her eyes and caught sight of the artist, she stopped short, stared at him, and exclaimed loudly with a strong German-Swiss accent:

"Meester Hardy!"

The artist, too, had stopped, surprised and pleased as he recognized her. "Why, it's Menga Davotz!" he exclaimed heartily.

The woman pressed both her hands to her buxom bosom and caught her breath for an instant. Then, speaking with great emotion, she said:

"Ach! Meester Hardy! I think I should never be going to see you any more again."

She seized the hand which he extended to her, and, bending her head, pressed her lips to it.

Laughing, Hardy gently drew his hand away.

"Here, here, stop that!" he admonished in a kindly tone.

"Ach, such a pleasure, so wonderful!" she went on, while her comely face beamed all over with smiles. "I can't make myself such words to say how good that it is to see you. You remembered me good, too, yes?"

"Of course, I remembered you," he declared warmly.

"Oh, but you look so fine, so pretty!" she said, half laughing, half crying.

The artist could not help being touched with her genuine delight at seeing him. He had boarded one summer at her mother's in Chamonix, among the Alps, and they had made him one of the family.

"Ach," went on Menga Davotz, still



a trifle hysterically, "will I forget when my little brother Conrad fell down those crevasse, the big crack in the ice, and would die, and you goes down and you ain't got no rope? That is something not even those guides would dare to done. You think we forget that ever? *Ach!* When I write my old mother and all the folks in Chamonix, I have dear happiness to see you some more, they will be so glad like me." She paused, and then asked with such genuine interest that it was impossible to take offense: "You have not got married yet, Meester Hardy?"

"No—not married yet."

"So?" laughing. "Not married! Because you have not fell in love, yes?"

Hardy's face took on a shade of gravity. "There might be other reasons, Menga."

"Ha! Ha! Your mind is thinking about some lady, right now perhaps," she ventured, eying him shrewdly, yet respectfully. "Some lady in Nort America, I bet you."

"No," absently.

"Not a French lady?"

"No."

She pouted.

"I don't believe you got your mind thinkin' about any lady at all," she declared, with swift change of front.

Hardy was silent for a moment, and then he turned to her resolutely, an odd look in his blue eyes.

"Menga, I want to find out something. There's a lovely lady who drives and rides in this neighborhood, usually on the loneliest roads; and I want to know who she is. She's an American—"

"The lady I work for here, the Comtesse De Saverne," interposed Menga, "she is American."

"But she's married."

"And your lady ain't married?"

"No," he answered resolutely. But his decision was prompted by desire rather than by any real knowledge.

"You don't know who she is, how can you tell?" persisted Menga, getting at the gist of the matter.

A sort of spasm seemed to contract

Hardy's heart for a moment, and then he answered very gravely:

"Because she mustn't be."

Menga shrugged her shoulders.

"Well, I do not know," she commented musingly.

"It couldn't be your countess," said Hardy, with strong conviction. "She's very fashionable, and very popular, isn't she?"

Menga nodded.

"Well, the lady I mean is always alone on her rides and drives. I've seen her from the woods and through gaps in hedges—wherever I've pitched my easel. She's never seen me—because she never looked."

Menga reflected an instant.

"I do not know any young American ladies," she said at last. "My, I would like to know her if I should see her."

"You will," cried Hardy, blushing a little through his tan. "If you ever see her you'll know she's the one."

Menga laughed.

"She is dot nice-looking?"

"You come over to my studio some day," suggested Hardy impulsively. "It's the old Saverne tower, you know. And I'll show you a picture I made of her."

Menga's eyes grew round with wonder and admiration.

"You make a picture of her! Just watch her go by two, three times?"

"One day she came to the church just over in the village, and alone," he explained. "I was there in the shadow. That was quite a long look, Menga, and so I made the picture."

"She has such a nice face?" repeated Menga again, with a shrewd look at his rapt countenance and dreamy eyes. "How does she look?"

"Just the way I always wanted some woman to look," he replied softly and slowly.

Menga clapped her hands delightedly.

"Meester Hardy, I think you told me my question, yes?" she exulted.

"What question?"

"When I asked you had you fell in love."

Hardy started to expostulate and

then stopped short. After all, was she so far wrong?

## CHAPTER II.

They were having tea—for the "five o'clock" has been thoroughly adopted as a French custom just now—on the terrace, over which awnings had been drawn to temper the too strong rays of the slowly descending sun.

The young hostess had not yet returned from her round of visits, but all the rest of the family, with the guests of their small house party, were gathered together.

Behind the tea table sat the Duchesse De St. Maur, a handsome old woman, with snowy puffs of hair on each side of her head—stately almost to the freezing point. Just now her dignity was intensified by the fact that, while she had tolerated, she had never approved of her son's American relatives by marriage, and the further fact that, in deference to the foreigners, the conversation was carried on in English, a language of which she neither spoke nor understood one word.

Beside the duchess was a very handsome, distinguished-looking woman of about thirty, to whom Victor De Savergne paid devoted attention, an attention to which she herself seemed by no means averse. And Victor's mother saw and understood it all, but only smiled indulgently.

Leaning over the parapet and looking down into the valley, and every once in a while sighing impatiently, as if expecting something or somebody that did not arrive, was a dapper, rather delicate-looking young man, with blond hair carefully brushed, and a very slight fair mustache, turned up in military fashion. This was the Vicomte Albert De Raimbault, the "tame cat," as the French say when they want to describe some one who has free access on any and all occasions to any particular family.

A little apart from the others, Mr. Baxter sipped disconsolately from the cup in his hands. He did not like tea, and there were one or two things which were troubling him not a little.

In the first place he had seen his grandson, and had found him a gentle, rather serious little fellow, but one whom he could not understand and who could not understand him. Little Edouard spoke only French! Nancy's child could not speak English! The idea was very disturbing. Then, Nancy had not come and her husband did not seem to miss her in the least. That was disturbing, too. Of course, he wasn't finding fault. Business is the man's side of the house; the other side is the woman's, especially if the child is a daughter. Mrs. Baxter had always—that is, he had always let her handle that.

"Well," he concluded to himself with a sigh, which he fancied was one of relief, "Mrs. Baxter always said it was the best for Nancy, and I guess she knows."

But if her liege lord was not enjoying himself, Mrs. Baxter certainly was. Snugly ensconced in a most comfortable chair with a real live prince to attend to her wants, what more could mortal woman desire? And the prince certainly could not have been more charming. The head of the De Savergne family possessed both a courtesy and a tact which were beyond reproach. What if a Lavater would have pronounced the prince, in spite of all his noble blood, a gentleman by effort rather than by instinct? What if that same Lavater should quote the old saying about scratching the Tartar and finding the Russian underneath? Externals are, after all, what count chiefly in this world, especially in the social sphere.

"Now, please do tell me something about the two guests you have with you," Mrs. Baxter was saying beamingly.

"One," said the prince in graceful compliance, "is—what you call?—your daughter's bosom friend, Renée De Montfort, a charming woman who loves your daughter."

A slight shade of disappointment appeared in Mrs. Baxter's eyes. "She is simply Madame De Montfort?" she asked.

"She is the Marquise De Montfort."

The shade disappeared as Mrs. Baxter exclaimed with rather undue rapture: "Oh, I am sure she is charming!"

"The other," proceeded the prince, "is my nephew's most intimate friend—Albert De Raimbault."

"Hasn't he any title?"

"Oh, yes, vicomte."

"Ah, Vee-comte Albert De Raimbault," rolling it on her tongue. "I am sure he is charming!"

How entrancing this was! To be on intimate terms with princes, duchesses, marquises, and viscounts, not to speak of the fact that one's own daughter was a countess!

The prince leaned forward impressively.

"Sst!" he began mysteriously, but yet smilingly. Again, Lavater would not have called that exactly a pleasant smile. "I'll tell you a secret. That poor Albert worships the ground your daughter steps on. It is droll."

"How perfectly delightful!" laughed Mrs. Baxter in gleeful maternal pride. Then she added more gravely: "Really, there doesn't seem to be any flaw in Nancy's existence, does there?"

The prince was silent for a moment. "Nothing—nothing that is serious," he said, at last, still smiling his inscrutable smile. "Or perhaps one little——" He shrugged his shoulders slightly, but expressively. "But it is merely—the young married woman must always find some tiny annoyance. As she grows older, she sees it is nothing, nothing at all; and as time passes she learns it is to be taken with a smile. Some trifles are a little more difficult for a young girl who has been brought up in the American fashion to understand, but she will learn, and she will acquit herself very well. Perhaps just now she imagines a little—she *imagines*."

Mrs. Baxter was very far from understanding the whole import of the prince's speech. Perhaps he was far from intending that she should; he looked upon it simply as the sowing of a tiny seed which should bear fruit

hereafter. At all events, Mrs. Baxter seized upon the last few words to reply sententiously:

"I always told Mr. Baxter that Nancy had too much imagination."

"Oh, she will learn," returned the prince reassuringly.

"You can count on me, prince," asserted Mrs. Baxter, with proud confidence, although she had not the slightest idea to what she was binding herself. "She'll be entirely sensible after I've had a few talks with her."

"I'm sure your influence will be for good," returned the prince gallantly. "This morning I was urging her to wear some of her pretty things; the De Savergne jewels. She refused me, I am sorry to say. If there has been any whispering of—well, it will have a good effect. You will join me to make a point of it?"

Mrs. Baxter bowed gravely in acquiescence. Somehow she was now vaguely alarmed.

"Ah," said the prince, rising, "here comes Madame De Montfort to speak to you." And with a low bow he moved away to join Mr. Baxter.

The marquise sank into the chair the prince had just vacated, and laid one of her slender, white hands, glittering with rings, caressingly on Mrs. Baxter's arm.

"I feel that I must know you better, dear Mrs. Baxter," she said purringly. She spoke English almost perfectly, with only the slightest accent. "I am so very, very fond of dear Nancy."

"Ah, my dear marquise," murmured Mrs. Baxter, overwhelmed; then effusively: "It is all so charming here. It is like a dream to me. When my Nancy was a little girl I made up my mind she should be surrounded by the best. The great trouble with even the most exclusive society in a republic like the States is that there are such multitudes of people who can't be made to understand that one is their superior. The very commonest sort of people sometimes ignore our position."

"Is it possible?" murmured Madame De Montfort, bravely and successfully conquering an inclination to smile.

"Yes, indeed, they do, they do," said Mrs. Baxter, as if the thing were incredible but true. "I assure you they do, indeed! But when I met the dear prince and he introduced Victor, I said to myself: 'That is the son-in-law for me. As a countess of the old nobility, my daughter's position will be assured not only in New York and Newport, but at every court in Europe.' And when I see the charm and distinction of the people who now surround Nancy——"

"Oh, madame!" smilingly protested the marquise.

But Mrs. Baxter proceeded earnestly:

"I say that it is no wonder our American girls have ambition for themselves, or that their mothers have the fine feeling for them that they do—no wonder that they marry abroad into something higher and better than they can get at home! I congratulate myself a thousand times that I had the foresight to provide this happiness for my daughter!"

At this juncture, the duchesse, apparently tired of the English-speaking company, disappeared into the château, dutifully attended by her son.

Mr. Baxter's voice rose from the little group composed of himself, the prince, and Albert De Raimbault, who had just joined the other two.

"Well, they can't say they don't have good-looking women in this country," he declared, casting a fleeting glance at Renée De Montfort. "Yes, sir. Some regular eye-openers! On our last night in Paris there was a woman in a box at the theatre, just the prettiest thing I ever did see anywhere. My Lord! Clothes, and jewels, and style! I never saw it beat. Everybody in the house was looking at her."

"That might have been Madame De Saint Croix," suggested the prince.

"No, it wasn't," denied Mr. Baxter, with the conviction of knowledge. "A fellow told me her name, said it was Di—Dee—no—Diane Delaige."

The prince could not repress a start, and he glanced hastily about to see if Victor were present.

Albert De Raimbault appeared highly amused.

"Diane Delaige," he corrected.

"Delaige! That's it!" cried Mr. Baxter triumphantly. "Diane Delaige!"

Raimbault's amusement seemed to increase. He stroked his mustache to conceal his inward laughter, while at the same time he shot a mischievous glance at the marquise. That lady's return look, however, was anything but amused; it was full of annoyance, even of suppressed anger.

The prince lifted his hand to check Baxter from proceeding any further.

"Ssh! My dear Baxter—pardon—that is a name we think it as well not to mention here."

Taken aback, Baxter frowned in a puzzled way.

"I hope I haven't made any break," he faltered.

"It is nothing, nothing," said the prince soothingly.

The situation, rather an awkward one, was relieved by the appearance of a liveried footman, who announced in French: "Madame the Countess has returned."

And then a rare vision of loveliness appeared on the threshold of the château. The tailor-made visiting costume set off the young countess' slender, girlish figure to perfection. Her face was a trifle pale, perhaps, but with the exquisite creamy pallor of old ivory that contrasted charmingly with the rich color of the beautifully formed lips. Her hair was of the darkest brown, almost black, save when the sunshine glinting upon it gave it a coppery tint. Perhaps her greatest beauty, however, was her eyes, which were of a deep purple color, shaded by long, curling lashes. They were inscrutable eyes, too, ever changing with the dominant emotion.

As she caught sight of the little group, she uttered a cry of joy, and darted impulsively forward.

"Nancy!" cried Baxter, his voice trembling with emotion, as he held out his arms to his daughter. "Here's your old daddy come to see you."

Regardless of all eyes, critical or

otherwise, the young countess darted forward and threw herself into her father's embrace.

"You're glad to see the old man?" he murmured in choking tones.

"So glad! So glad!" And she clung to him, almost sobbing.

A touch on her shoulder, and she drew herself from her father's arms to embrace her mother, if not quite as effusively, nevertheless with the tenderest affection.

"My dearest child!"

"Oh, I am glad to see you!"

"And now let me look at you," said her father, covertly wiping his eyes. But in another moment his emotion was changed to something closely approaching consternation.

"Why, what's the matter?" he gasped. "You been sick?"

Nancy tried to smile.

"No, never."

Baxter turned to the prince, who had been silently contemplating the scene through half-closed eyes.

"Why, prince, look at her! I leave it to you. She looks all run down."

"Our dear child is in the best of health, I think," replied the prince, at the same time bending upon the young woman a look of peculiar scrutiny.

She returned his gaze with one, half of fear, half of defiance. Then: "Of course, I am," she said, with a sudden assumption of gayety.

Her father shook his head. Before he could say anything further, however, Renée De Montfort intervened.

"We'll leave you now with your dear parents," she said. "Come, prince. Come, viscount."

Nancy shot her a glance of gratitude and understanding.

When the three were left alone together, Mr. Baxter returned to the charge.

"Really, Nancy, I am worried about you. I—"

But Nancy flung toward him a beseeching gesture. A strange look came into her beautiful eyes, the look of one who knows that there is an ordeal to be gone through with and who is seeking for strength to withstand it.

"Please not now, papa," she pleaded. "Just give me a minute to pull myself together."

As she spoke she moved toward the parapet and stood, with her back toward them, gazing at the purple Pyrenees with vacant eyes.

"Why, what's all this?" exclaimed Mrs. Baxter in a tone of aggrieved surprise.

"I was afraid of it," retorted Baxter moodily, and then he added with significant emphasis: "She ain't happy!"

Mrs. Baxter turned upon her husband a look surcharged with indignation.

"Nonsense!" she ejaculated severely. "I tell you she's the happiest woman in the world. How could she be otherwise?"

Before Baxter could reply, Nancy turned and came slowly toward them. Her face was, if anything, paler than ever, and she seemed on the verge of tears. But when she spoke it was in a steady voice, with just the faintest tinge of sarcasm.

"Yes, mamma, how could it be otherwise?"

"See what she's got," proceeded Mrs. Baxter, still addressing her husband. "Her position! Everything."

"Everything in the world," murmured Nancy lifelessly.

"All this," persisted Mrs. Baxter, with an expansive gesture which took in the château and the surrounding landscape.

There was a strange light in Nancy's eyes, half satirical, half painful, as she subconsciously imitated her mother's gesture.

"All this," she repeated. "It would be strange, wouldn't it, if, with all this, I should be the *unhappiest* woman in the world?"

Mrs. Baxter stared at her in speechless anger and amazement; but Baxter, with a sigh, said in a sort of sad triumph:

"I told you so!"

"It seems like Providence," continued the young countess, "your coming one day ahead. It's this very day that things have come to a crisis."

"What things?" gasped Mrs. Baxter, partially recovering herself.

"My whole life with these people."

"Do you mean to complain of it?" asked Mrs. Baxter, as if the very idea were beyond comprehension.

Nancy's eyes shot fire as she flung up her head, and answered in a tone vibrant with long pent-up feeling:

"With all my strength and soul I protest against it!"

"What in the world," began Mrs. Baxter, "can you find——"

"When you married me to Victor," Nancy interrupted, controlling her voice with an effort and speaking more calmly, though still with an undercurrent of suppressed passion, "I was too young to know that men of his class over here often have a reputation for what they call 'gallantry.' That was one of the things I learned after I was married. Another was that my husband was true to his type. And still another was that the incident of his marriage to me was not to interfere with his 'gallantry.' This much I learned for myself, but——" She faltered slightly, and then, recovering herself, went on: "But they taught me the rest. What you call the old nobility, mamma, such families as the De Savergnes, live by rules they've had for generations; iron-bound rules they all obey, and the chiefest rule is that no matter what horrors go on in the depths they must never appear on the surface. In all the decalogue they recognize but one crime—you may commit all the others if you avoid that one—that is, to make a scandal. Not what we mean by a scandal. It's not a scandal to them for a husband to be a man of 'gallantry,' but it is a scandal for his wife to refuse to bear the common lot of wives—of *their* wives. So they taught me that, even in the shock of discovering my husband's gallantry, I must make no outcry that could be heard. They taught me that rule pretty thoroughly, you see, and I've borne the common lot pretty thoroughly, too. Victor's most permanent fancy 'has lasted now more than a year."

Mrs. Baxter made a gesture of pro-

test, as if not wishing to listen; but Nancy, ignoring this, went on gravely:

"Oh, it's public property. The object of it is a woman known everywhere on the Continent for her beauty, her jewels, and her infamous life. They point her out to you in the theatre. I myself have had the honor of having her stare at me as I left my box."

Baxter, who had been listening with all his ears, and with his honest heart quivering with indignation, broke in incredulously:

"It isn't—that—Diane Delage?"

Nancy nodded.

"That name and my husband's have been sung together in every cabaret in Paris. The worst king in Europe wasted a fortune on her, and Victor, it seems, is his successor."

Moved by a variety of emotions, Mrs. Baxter said agitatedly:

"My child, you are putting things very brutally."

"There's no other way to put them," declared Nancy, with determination, and then she reverted to her theme. "They had some difficulty in teaching me to bear it. You know the proper behavior among them is for a woman to act as if she were unconscious of such things. You are to ignore them. If you can't, you see, you're ludicrous, *bourgeoise*, vulgar. I wasn't an apt pupil at first; in fact, I was so backward in my lesson that the head of the house, the Prince De Savergne, himself, had to take me in charge. I've been in training under him for a long while; the whip he has used, so far, has been ridicule—a gracious, airy, contemptuous ridicule! I don't know what they are," with a helpless gesture, "but he has other weapons in reserve if that isn't effective."

"The prince!" burst out Mrs. Baxter, in violent protest at criticism of that high and mighty personage. "Why, he's the sweetest man in the world!"

Nancy's eyes contracted, and she shivered as if in bodily fear.

"I'm afraid of him," she exclaimed. "I could never face him alone. That's why I'm so glad you came just now; because you're here to stand by me if I



have to do what it seems I must do today."

"What do you think you must do today?" demanded Mrs. Baxter in angry apprehension.

Nancy cast an appealing look at her mother. Already she was beginning to realize that she could expect little aid or support from that side of the family, and her heart sank at the thought. But she had reached the end of her tether of forbearance, and her determination was unshaken.

"This morning I drove over to Fontenay to shop," she began in explanation. "I was late getting away, so I lunched at the hotel. While I was there I saw Diane Delage arrive from Paris. We've been in the country two months, and I thought perhaps the affair was broken off; but this means that Victor has brought her to my very door."

Mr. Baxter made an infuriated exclamation, but his wife checked him with a look of severe authority.

"I never heard anything so absurd!" she cried, turning again to Nancy. "Your poor, dear husband may know nothing whatever of her being here."

Nancy's lips curled.

"Do you think that likely?" she asked quietly.

"I think it almost certain the poor, dear man has nothing to do with her coming. There's no proof that—"

"There's one way to know," interrupted the countess, with determination. "She's there at Fontenay. If he goes to Fontenay to-day—"

"Even that might be a coincidence," persisted Mrs. Baxter.

"If it happens, I'll go to-night," announced Nancy grimly.

"What on earth are you talking about?" almost shrieked Mrs. Baxter. "Where are you going?"

"If he goes to Fontenay, I've finished." She spoke with an air of finality from which there was no appeal. "I'm through with it all."

"Nancy Baxter," cried her mother, "here you go magnifying a peccadillo of your husband's till you want to leave

him! You talk like one of those simple American wives."

Nancy turned on her sharply. "That's what I ought to have been."

Tears of mingled vexation and alarm started into Mrs. Baxter's eyes.

"Oh! Oh!" she whimpered. "After all my sacrifices to put you where you are, this is the way you show your gratitude! You have everything that anybody could want, and you talk of throwing it away for a miserable whim of jealousy!"

Nancy laughed mirthlessly.

"Jealousy!" she repeated. "Don't you understand the difference? It's simply self-respect. I wish I could be jealous of Victor, but—I can't ever be again."

Mrs. Baxter raised her hands in horror.

"To me that's immoral!" she declared, with emphasis. "Not love the man you married!"

Nancy made a gesture of impatience.

"I didn't marry anybody," she retorted. "No girl of eighteen ever does. I married an idea—an idea that had been put into my head that all this was the greatest thing in the world. It was your idea, mamma."

As if overpowered by the accusation, Mrs. Baxter sank down heavily in a chair.

"This is my reward!" she declaimed with theatrical pathos.

Mr. Baxter went to her and patted her on the shoulder.

"Now, mother, she-ain't upbraiding you," he said soothingly.

But Mrs. Baxter paid no attention to him.

"We come here expecting a happy visit among charming people," she continued in an acme of self-commiseration, "and we find you in this condition. If you can't control yourself better, you'll make your father and me very uncomfortable."

Nancy looked at her for a moment, and then she turned to her father in a manner that was both determined and appealing.

"Papa, you're going to stand by me, aren't you?"

Greatly troubled, Mr. Baxter answered slowly:

"Nancy, I can't deny that it's pretty hard to have you put up with such things——"

"What's that?" interrupted Mrs. Baxter fiercely, rising to her feet as quickly as her bulk would permit.

Mr. Baxter was not a cowardly man. He had plenty of self-assertiveness, as his business associates would have testified; but he had been too long under the domination of his wife, so far as family matters were concerned, to take a contrary stand to her now. Still he could not help a qualm of shame as he said hesitatingly:

"But, Nancy, I have always left this kind of thing to your mother, you know—and everything over here sort of confuses me. I wish I could do something for you, but you see how it is—I don't just know how I can interfere."

Nancy said nothing. She realized that it would be futile to persist. She must stand alone in whatever course she should decide to pursue. With a long sigh, that went at least to her father's heart, she turned slowly and passed into the château.

### CHAPTER III.

Matrimonial interviews were scarcely to Victor De Savergne's taste, but he could not repress a thrill of admiration as he entered the library that night after dinner, and saw the young countess standing alone before the fireplace. Whatever her origin may have been, she was a woman who, with her brilliant dark beauty and graceful carriage, was, to all outward appearances, at least, worthy to bear the ancient name which was now hers by marriage.

He approached her with a smile upon his face, a face still handsome in spite of the lines that dissipation had stamped upon it.

"You sent for me?" he asked amiably. "It is long since we have had a tête-à-tête."

Nancy turned to her husband calmly. She had no hope that the interview would change anything in any way, but

she felt it due to him and to herself to give him one last chance.

"Yes," she said gravely, "I sent for you. Victor, I am on the point of making a very important decision."

He raised his eyebrows slightly. "Indeed!" in courteous surprise.

"And I wish something from you."

As she spoke, she sat down in an armchair and motioned him to another.

He drew it a little closer to her before replying.

"You wish my advice?" he ventured.

"No," she said slowly. "Something much more difficult for you than that."

"I am glad that it is difficult," he returned, with a gallant inclination of his head. "There will be the more value in my giving it."

She leaned forward a little as if trying to read the thoughts behind the mask of his countenance.

"I want you to give me five minutes of absolute honesty."

"But I give you a lifetime of that," he returned, with a smile.

"No, no!" she protested urgently. "I don't want that. I just want a straight talk, face to face."

He bowed again with graceful courtesy, and said, the smile still on his lips:

"Permit me to say with absolute honesty that I am facing a very charming face."

She struck her hands passionately together. "Oh, can't you do it?" she pleaded tensely. "Can't I get you to face me straight out, as if we were two men talking truth together?"

His debonaire expression did not change, nor did his outward show of extreme and gallant courtesy. "It has been the joy of my life that you were not a man."

Nancy, angry and humiliated, made but little effort to conceal her feelings.

"Can't I get anything but little words—silly little phrases from you? Do you think that you can fill up my life with that?"

He allowed a look of surprise to dawn upon his face. "But is not your time very happily occupied?" as if it were inconceivable that it could be otherwise.

"I'm thinking of how your time is occupied," said Nancy straightforwardly. "There is a question I want to ask you about that."

"Oh, but that would be very dull telling," with a deprecatory wave of his hand. "Let us talk of things more interesting. I am no egotist to prattle of myself."

The battle was going against her, and she knew it. She was no match for his evasive selfishness, his unruffled carelessness of herself and her feelings.

"Ah, you can't do it!" she exclaimed despairingly. "You can't even give me five honest minutes."

"Oh, my dear!" he protested, in much the tone one would use to soothe a capacious child.

She recognized this attitude, and it increased her exasperation both with him and with herself for having needlessly incurred this unpleasant and fruitless interview.

"Oh, I'm not blaming you," she observed, with biting sarcasm. "It isn't your fault. You are just part of a system. Whatever bitter medicine I'm taking is my own fault. You married me advantageously, as you considered it. I left our system to take yours. I'm paying for it, but I haven't learned to pay gracefully."

"Ah, you do all things gracefully," he affirmed, with his languorous smile. She started impulsively to her feet. "You can't do it! I give it up!" And she turned away from him.

He rose also, laughing good-humoredly. "Of course, our system is yours. Since our marriage everything I have is yours. You have what I have."

She wheeled about on him like a flash. "No, I haven't!" she denied vehemently. "You have happiness!"

There was a hint—just a hint—of a sneer in his smile now.

"And you wish to be romantically happy?" he asked.

She sighed wearily. "I don't think I was ever romantically anything. I think that's something out of which I've been cheated."

"Oh, my dear!" in a tone of gentle

reproach. "No romance when we were married?"

Her whole manner changed. There was spirit enough now in her sparkling eyes and slightly flushed cheeks as she faced him.

"I was married for the same reason that a man joins a good club," she declared. "A girl who does that misses something—don't you think so?—something that ought to be a pretty big part of her life. But it's too late to—"

"I beg your pardon," he interrupted suavely, but ruthlessly. "You forget that we have guests. I, at least, feel it my duty to return to the drawing room. *Au revoir*, my dear, and don't worry about trifles."

In another moment he was gone. She glanced after him for a moment and then sank down again in her easy-chair, with her eyes fixed moodily upon the blazing logs.

She was roused from her uncomfortable reflections by the frou-frou of silken robes, and, glancing up, saw Renée De Montfort. Nancy believed thoroughly in the friendship of this beautiful woman for herself, but she longed to have renewed assurance of it now. She rose hastily and stretched out both hands impulsively.

"You are really fond of me, aren't you, Renée?"

The marquise looked a little surprised as she took Nancy's hands in both her own.

"My dear! How many times must I tell you so?" she protested gently.

"Then," wistfully, "if I find that conditions here are unbearable—"

"Tut! Tut!" broke in Madame De Montfort, chiding sweetly. "I see how it is. You are again cross with that poor Victor. Eh, look at me, my little one! Do I go making a long face? My husband is at Monte Carlo all winter, Trouville all summer—how do I know what he does? When we meet we are so polite—the best of friends."

Nancy released her hands.

"Then your advice," she said, with a gulp, "is to learn to be like you? That's the best help you can give me?"

The marquise smiled indulgently.

"I love you too much to give you any other," she replied softly, and then, with well-concealed relief as De Raimbault at that moment entered the room: "But see, here is that poor Albert longing for a word from you. Give him one smile and make him happy."

She kissed Nancy and glided away with that sinuous movement peculiar to her, and which her friends compared to the walk of a sylph and her enemies to that of a panther.

Left alone with the countess, Albert De Raimbault came quickly forward to her side. There was a certain suppressed excitement in his manner.

"Something has happened," he said quickly and very sympathetically. "You wished Renée to help you. Nothing you do escapes these eyes—nothing, nothing, nothing at all. I know something new has happened."

"No, nothing new," replied Nancy, with a bitterness she did not seek to veil.

"Can you not trust me enough to tell me?" pleaded De Raimbault eagerly. "When have I behaved in such a way as to make you doubt my devotion—" She gave him a swift look in which there was just the vaguest distrust, and he finished rather lamely: "My friendship for you?"

As she looked at him and listened to his words, the distrust vanished, and an idea was suddenly born in her brain, an idea the carrying out of which meant to her safety, happiness.

"I do need friends," she said sadly.

He leaped at the opportunity. "One is here!" he cried enthusiastically.

"I believe you, Albert," she said, with sincerity.

"Only try me, prove me!" he begged, just a little melodramatically.

But Nancy did not notice that little touch. It was all very real to her. She was wonderfully ingenuous for a woman of the world. In spite of all that she had been through, all the disillusion that had been forced upon her, she still retained much of the naïve guilelessness of her girlhood—the bloom had not yet been rubbed off; perhaps it never would be. And now

she really believed in the single-heartedness of Albert De Raimbault's protestations, and was almost as ready to accept his offer of assistance as she would have that of one of her former American friends. Still, for some reason or other, she hesitated.

"Oh, it's too much to ask," she murmured.

"No, no!" he cried, all aflame with curiosity and suspense. "Nothing is too much."

"Are you sure you mean that?" she asked earnestly.

"Mean it!" And he cast his eyes upward as if appealing to Heaven to attest his sincerity.

Nancy was thoughtful for a moment, and then she said slowly:

"The prince and Victor are old friends of yours; suppose that what I asked would make them enemies instead of friends?"

"Do you think I would balance that for two moments against the privilege of being your servant?" he asked, with tremendous fervor.

Nancy rose with an air of decision and gave him her hand.

"Then I'll ask you for the sacrifice, and be proud to claim as a friend a man who has real chivalry for a woman in trouble."

He bent over and kissed her hand, but not too passionately. He was too skilled a sportsman to alarm his quarry.

"If my husband goes to Fontenay to-night," she went on quickly, "I am going away. I'll go to-night, but I can't do it without help. There's my little boy, you see, and I don't want a scene. I'll have to tell you that even my father and mother are against me."

"I am your slave," he asserted emphatically. "You may command me in everything."

"I'll take you at your word," she said, with a sad smile, "if Victor goes to Fontenay."

An hour later, the house party, with the exception of the duchesse whose habit it was to retire early, and the young countess who had gone to the nursery as Menga had reported that

little Edouard was wakeful, were gathered together in the drawing room.

It was about ten o'clock, when a servant entered, bearing a telegram upon a silver salver, and presented it to the prince, who happened to be talking to Mr. and Mrs. Baxter. The prince glanced at it, and indicated his nephew, who was a little distance away with the marquise and De Raimbault.

"It is for Monsieur Le Comte," he said.

The servant crossed the room to Victor. It was a breathless moment for all. Mr. and Mrs. Baxter and De Raimbault had cause to be interested in a telegram for the count just at that moment; and Madame De Montfort, too, had reasons of her own, a little different, perhaps, but quite as cogent.

Victor opened the telegram, read it, and, with an ejaculation of well-acted impatience, tore it up, and let the fragments fall upon the rug at his feet.

"What is it?" asked the marquise, who had been scrutinizing him with keen attention.

"I am obliged to go to Paris on business," exclaimed the count, with an air of boredom at the prospect.

"Paris!" Mrs. Baxter breathed a sigh of relief.

"It is most annoying," said Victor, coming over to where the Baxters were seated, "that so soon after your arrival I must go away. There is no escape. I cannot neglect my estate. Business is business, as you say in America. You will excuse me while I give some orders." He looked at his watch. "My train goes at once."

As soon as he had gone, Mrs. Baxter turned toward her husband. They were alone; for the marquise, with an imperious wave of her fan, had summoned the prince to her side, and Albert De Raimbault was idly poking at the scraps of the telegram with the toe of his pointed patent-leather shoe.

"To Paris, did you hear?" said she. "He's not going to Fontenay, after all. That shows how foolish Nancy is."

But the countess' father shook his head. "I hope so," he muttered plaintively.

In a very few moments Nancy herself entered the room. Her face was very pale, and her lips were closed in a set, determined manner. Without a glance at the others, she crossed straight over to where her father and mother were seated.

"He's going," she said, with brief asperity.

"Have you seen him? Did he tell you?" put in Mrs. Baxter quickly.

"No. I saw the servant he sent to pack his bag. He's going."

Mrs. Baxter's mouth widened into a broad grin of triumph.

"To Paris!" she announced gleefully. "His telegram called him to Paris. To Paris, do you understand?"

Nancy gazed at her mother blankly. She was dumfounded. Then her suspicions rested upon no foundation whatever. Her apparently impregnable castle tumbled and fell before her like a flimsy house of cards.

"To Paris!" she echoed blankly.

At this moment Albert De Raimbault, who had been gazing fixedly at the largest fragment of the torn telegram, which he had detached from the others with his shoe, suddenly picked it up, rose to his feet, and advancing to the Baxter family, with an enigmatical smile extended it to Nancy.

"Fontenay!" he whispered to her, quietly but significantly.

Nancy took the fragment, looked at it for a moment, and then held it out for her mother's inspection. Mrs. Baxter gave it a sharp glance, took in its meaning, and then in an angry, frightened, but suppressed voice, and with a glance over her shoulder at the prince and the marquise, who, however, were apparently engaged in an animated conversation and paying no attention to what was going on at the other end of the room, said in an appealing tone:

"Now, Nancy, you've got to be sensible!"

Nancy looked steadily at De Raimbault, a glance surcharged with significance, a glance which she knew that he thoroughly understood, and then spoke very quietly, but with an undercurrent of immense determination, as she let

the fragment of the telegram flutter from the tips of her fingers:

"Yes, mother—now I'm going to be sensible."

#### CHAPTER IV.

It was an ideal spot which chance had led Jack Hardy to stumble upon for his artistic pursuits in France. The north he knew well and loved, but this was the first time he had made any prolonged stay in the south, and he was enchanted with the land of the Basque and the Béarnais, with its hardy mountaineers and the Spanish remnant of the old Romany tribes.

The medieval tower which he had leased, built of smooth stone blocks, mellow gray in tint, stood in a green and fertile valley, just below the Châteaude Savergne. On the other side was an unsurpassed view, where the Pyrenees reared their royal crests, snow-crowned in winter, in summer wrapped in a sunshine as radiant and glorious as the gateway of heaven. Dancing waterfalls and sparkling streams rushed through their gorges and down their rocky sides.

The interior of the tower Hardy had fitted up in a most artistic manner. It had been a labor of love with him. The largest of the three or four rooms he had selected as his studio. It contained an old-fashioned fireplace of rough stone, about which were wooden settles of quaint design. The door leading to the outside porch was Gothic in architecture and crudely carved. Similar doors led to his sleeping room and the tiny kitchen. The ceiling showed rough-hewn wooden beams, a rich brown with age. On one side was a good breach, which Hardy had partially filled in with stucco and rubble to make a highly satisfactory studio window. An iron bracket projecting from a jut near the fireplace had been made to do service as the support of a large modern lamp. The walls were hung with tapestries, which the artist in his wanderings had collected; while all about were easels, canvases, finished and unfinished, and all the paraphernalia of a painter's work.

Hardy glanced about him with satisfaction and a sense of well-being, as he lounged back at a little table drawn up close to the blazing fire and finished his coffee. A phonograph on another table was pouring forth the sweet strains of the "*Chanson De Bohème*."

During the late afternoon a dense vapory mist had floated down the valley, filling it and obscuring it. And now a thunderstorm had broken out. As Hardy listened to the peals of thunder and the heavy downpour of the rain outside, he felt doubly comfortable and grateful for being so well housed, so well protected from the wind and weather.

He touched a little bell on the table, and in a moment or two there entered from the kitchen an old, stout, gray-haired peasant woman, wearing a faded blue dress and spotless white apron and cap. This was Hardy's entire staff of servants, and very well satisfied he was with the arrangement, for the old woman took excellent care of him.

He told Celestine in French that he had finished, and while she was clearing away the table and putting things to rights, he proceeded to fill his pipe.

"Well," he began, addressing the old servant in English, as was his wont. It amused him, and it produced no effect upon her, as she did not understand a single word. "Well, we'll have our little evening chat. What!" Celestine shrugged her shoulders and smiled hopelessly, while still continuing her work. "Yes, I see what you think. I am a crazy American. But, Lord, a man must talk to somebody sometimes. All the better if the person he talks to doesn't understand, especially if he wants to tell her secrets."

He lit his pipe, took one or two luxurious puffs, and then continued with his monologue, evidently enjoying it.

"I take the greatest pleasure in opening my heart to you. What I really want to talk to you about is this lady here." He walked over to an easel on which was a portrait of a young woman, with masses of dark hair, lustrous eyes like Russian violets bathed in dew, and an exquisite, clear



brunette complexion. "I can't talk to the phonograph, can I? And you certainly understand I've got to talk about her to somebody. The lady on the easel, Celestine, the fair unknown, you comprehend, is she, the one mysterious, well-beloved she. You think there are only three of us in this eccentric family, you and the phonograph and I; but you're wrong. There are four; and the fourth, who has never been here, is the most here of us all. She is the first with me, this fourth! I saw her again to-day. She passed me as I came through the village. She did not see me; she looked as always, very sad and lonely and far away."

He paused a moment, gazing steadfastly at the lovely face before him, and then resumed dreamily:

"I think I've caught that here. Yes, I've got that pretty well. I'd like to have followed her to see where she lives. Do you think she stays at that wretched little hotel, Celestine?"

From the rising inflection of his voice the old peasant knew that he had asked a question, but she could only ejaculate an impotent "Monsieur!" with the same hopeless shrug and smile.

Hardy laughed gleefully. "Evidently you do not wish to commit yourself! Yes, they'd call it a 'haunting face' in the storiottes. Ah, my dear," with a long sigh, "you've haunted me! It's rather a ghostly love affair of mine, isn't it, Celestine? Saying pretty things to a memory sketch that can't understand, and talking about her to you who can't understand, in this lonely old tower of ours—ah, not lonelier than her eyes say she is. You know, I always suspected something like this would happen to me some day, that I'd see a face and at the very first sight of it I'd say: 'That's my lady—it's she or nobody for me!' Oh," suddenly facing Celestine, "I understand that shake of the head, madame, and your muttered peasant dialect. All Americans are insane; they talk to themselves, eh? Vanish, pessimist!" For Celestine had finished her work, and, with many a shake of her gray, white-capped head, was retreating to the kitchen.

Hardy went to the settle by the fire, and stretched himself out comfortably, puffing at his pipe and listening to the phonograph. He had changed the cylinder, and it was now sending forth the sweet-sad notes of "Way Down Upon the Suwanee River."

In spite of his enthusiastic rhapsody in front of the picture, it would scarcely be true to say that he had fallen in love with the fair original, and yet— At all events, his happiest hours were spent, as how, in dreaming of her and of the moment they should meet; for he had determined that, somehow, that meeting should be brought about.

The storm grew worse. The wind was now a howling blast, and the rain dashed more and more in angry defiance against the window. Suddenly Hardy's reflections were disturbed by the honk-honk of an automobile which rose above the tumult without. The car must be very near, just outside of the door of the tower, in fact. He rose hastily, shut off the phonograph, and turned toward the Gothic doorway. But, struck by a sudden thought, he paused; and, retracing his steps, took the portrait from the easel and placed it on the floor, with its face to the wall. Then he drew back the heavy bolt of the door, and half opened it. Beyond was a narrow, dark stone passageway leading to the porch.

Again the siren wailed, and then Hardy heard a voice from the passageway inquiring in French if any one was at home. The artist threw the door wide open, and in another moment there appeared on the threshold a tall, thin figure in a long coat and a black slouch hat, both dripping with rain.

The newcomer advanced into the room and threw aside his coat and hat. Although he had never met him personally, Hardy was familiar with the saturnine, lantern-jawed face, the phenomenally thin lips, and the beady eyes under the beetling brows, and knew that he was in the presence of the Prince De Savergne, his landlord.

"So!" exclaimed the prince, turning toward the artist, and speaking with the greatest ease and unctious. "It is Mon-

sieur Hardy, I am sure. And I am the Prince De Savergne. Ah, ha, my young friend, we show you some real Boulognese weather. O—o—o—f! What a villainous time! This window of yours, the one light in the whole valley—it looks hospitable. I would wager you have already had some lost wanderers inquiring the way to-night."

All the time he was speaking, he was examining the apartment with a sharp but furtive glance, and this was not lost upon the keen-eyed artist.

"I don't believe even the foxes are out to-night," replied Hardy pleasantly, stifling the inward repulsion with which his visitor involuntarily inspired him. "Won't you come to the fire?"

"You have had nobody to seek shelter from the storm?" insisted the prince, but drawing a little nearer to the fire as he had been requested. "Not even a foolish lady who might have been tempted out on a foolish quest?"

Hardy could not refrain from looking the surprise he felt at these questions, but he answered collectedly:

"Not even a tramp. Are you looking for some one?"

"I am looking for——" He broke off suddenly, changing the subject with a smile. "My dear young friend, I do not wonder you are surprised that I should visit you to-night. But all my life I have been the victim of impulse. To-night an impulse came. I said: 'To the devil with the weather! I will go to see Mr. Hardy.'"

"Indeed!" said Hardy, politely incredulous.

The prince's eyes were still roving here and there, from one object to another, and Hardy watched him, more and more mystified.

"Ah, it is good to be near art once more," observed the prince blandly. "And you are a collector, I see, also."

"Collector? I? No."

"But that is a very fine old screen," advancing toward the object in question, which was an unusually large one.

"Oh, that tapestry——"

"A very fine piece, I should say," bending forward to examine it. "Very

good, indeed. And the lining, the other side? Is that tapestry also?"

"No, plain cloth."

"Ah, Mr. Hardy," exclaimed the prince, with a waggish shake of his head, "I fear you are modest in your possessions. Permit me. I will look for myself." He suited the action to the word, and passed around behind the screen, only to reappear again instantly. "No, you are right. Still, it is a very good screen."

He strolled about, touching a little some of the canvases. "How I wish I might look at these!"

Hardy advanced toward the lamp. "I can give you more light, if you wish," he offered.

But the prince waved the idea aside. "No, no, daytime for pictures always." He crossed to Hardy and placed a talonlike, but well-kept, hand upon his shoulder. "My young friend, I envy you," he said genially. "If I had not been so unfortunately born as to be obliged to take up the responsibilities of the head of a house, I should have been a painter and led this free and happy life of art. How charming to come and paint here in this old tower? When I was a little boy and it was all ruinous, I played here such happy games of childhood. Yonder was the old guardroom—quite a large room."

"I use that for my bedroom," explained Hardy.

"I fear it must be damp."

"No, it's dry enough."

"The rain does not come in?" persisted the prince, taking a candle from among those on the mantelpiece as he spoke.

"Not at all."

The Prince De Savergne moved toward the door of the bedroom. "As your landlord," he said, with an ingratiating smile, "you will allow me to see. Young people are very careless, but when we grow older we pay for the cold and wet of our youth."

He opened the door, and, lifting the candle, peered around the bedroom. Then he returned and replaced the candle on the mantelpiece.

"It seems you have done wonders.

It is, as you say, quite dry. Ah, what childhood games we played here so long ago, in these three rooms of the old tower! If I do not forget, that is the only other door?" indicating the third exit from the apartment.

"Yes," agreed Hardy, a little stiffly. "I made a kitchen of that."

"Ah, that is droll," laughed the prince. "In my ancestors' time it was a little cell for prisoners. I must see it as a kitchen."

He crossed over, without asking permission, and opened the third door, devoting to the kitchen the same scrutiny that he had bestowed upon the bedroom.

"It is comic," he said, returning to the fireplace. "There is your good servant at work where my great-great-grandfather walled up his daughter-in-law alive. Poor woman! That must have been a curious sensation, eh, to see the stones go in one by one, so close to you, till finally——"

He finished with a gesture, as if he felt himself surrounded by stone, and smiled at Hardy. But the latter was perplexed and a little angry. Even if he were his tenant, why should this prince come and make a search of his quarters? For search it was. Why, the one might have been a government official by his actions, and the other suspected of being a counterfeiter or running an illicit still! With an effort, however, Hardy thrust aside his irritation and answered evenly:

"Your great-great-grandfather must have been a cheerful old body."

The prince smiled. "Don't you suppose the lady must have been very irritating to put him to such an extreme?" he suggested rather gruesomely. "I think the old régime was very convenient."

"For your great-great-grandfather's daughter-in-law?" questioned the artist satirically. The more he saw of this prince and listened to his conversation, the less he liked him.

"No, for my great-great-grandfather." The tone was quite serious.

"Nowadays, of course——"

"We still have our means of argument," finished the prince significantly. Hardy cast a keen glance at him.

"I dare say." And the words were more fraught with meaning than showed on the surface.

"Of course, walling up, as one argument," continued the prince lightly, "had to be abandoned after our eligible young men discovered America."

"I learned to-day," said Hardy slowly, "that your nephew is one of these modern discoverers."

The prince waved his hand with airy deprecation.

"Yes, we are in the fashion. We have an American in the family—charming like all Americans. Perhaps you have met my niece."

"I don't think I have ever seen her," Hardy replied quite truthfully.

"She is not a woman to forget, once having seen."

Hardy smiled reminiscently.

"Her mother told me to-day that the Comtesse De Savergne is the happiest woman in the world."

The prince returned the smile, but its motive was different.

"She is, though she has moments when she looks the most unhappy—a deceptive look; at such times she will probably be planning a game of tennis. It masks—that look—a spirit of too much self-reliance. She has, perhaps, too much of that good characteristic of your good race—she is too likely to act for herself."

These words were not spoken lightly. The prince hoped they would sink in and be remembered if by chance this American artist should ever hear anything about the differences in the Savergne family.

"Now, my dear young friend," he concluded cordially, extending his hand in the most courteous manner, with no touch of condescension in it, "I like to think of some one living down here in our lonely tower, and I wish myself the pleasure of another little call on you some time when there is daylight to see your pictures."

Hardy forced himself to take the hand—it was odd how repugnant he

found it to be—and to say with a show of regret: "You seem to be in a hurry."

"The time for pleasant things is always short with me. To be quite frank," as though an afterthought had struck him, "it was partly that self-reliance of my niece, Madame De Saverne, which has brought me out to-night. You will think me foolish, but we have lost a little dog from the château, a most valuable little animal, belonging to the comtesse, and she is so fond of it I hoped to find it for her, for I feared unless it were found she might be tempted to come and look for it herself."

Hardy could with good will have struck the suave aristocrat for this insult to his intelligence, but he had sense enough not to make a scene, and forced himself to say:

"Not on a night like this?"

The prince shrugged his shoulders. "Your countrywomen are charming, but they are self-willed, Mr. Hardy. I resume my search. I must embrace this devil of a weather and take him for a companion in my wanderings."

"I hope you'll find the dog."

"Thanks. *Au revoir.*"

"Good night."

Hardy accompanied his self-imposed guest to the door and closed it behind him. Then he slowly and meditatively refilled his pipe. What did all this mean? The prince without doubt had come to the tower on the chance of finding there some one or something he was in search of. A lost dog? Bah! But what then? Whom then? It was a mystery greater than the riddle propounded to Oedipus by the Sphinx. Well, it was no affair of his.

Hardy was startled from his reflections by the quick opening and shutting of the outside door. As if moved by a galvanic shock, he leaped to his feet, and then stood rooted in amazement, not daring to believe the evidence of his senses. On the threshold was a figure, wet, bedraggled, woebegone—but the most beautiful vision that could have appeared to him. It was the lady of his dreams, here in flesh and blood, in his own studio!

"It's you! It's you!" he murmured breathlessly, choking. "You've come here!"

She was trembling and evidently greatly exhausted, but she managed to say weakly in French: "I beg your pardon, sir."

He took a step toward her and paused irresolute. "You may speak your own language to me," he said encouragingly.

"I'm sorry to bother you," she faltered. "I've lost my way, and I—I fell in that last ravine. I—I saw your light."

She swayed uncertainly. In an instant he was at her side and supporting her with his arm. He led her gently to the settle, and, after she was ensconced as comfortably there as the circumstances would allow, he deftly helped her to remove her wet outer garments; and, pouring out a glass of wine, insisted upon her drinking it.

Presently, a slight flush stole into her cheeks. "I will soon be all right," she said, giving him a grateful look, "if you will let me sit by your fire just a moment."

Hardy's heart throbbed madly. "You'll have to stay longer than that, I think," he rejoined determinedly.

"I can't. I can't spare more than five minutes. I am afraid I took the wrong road altogether."

He was gazing at her with adoring, incredulous eyes. "I think it was the right road for me," he said in low, tense tones. "It isn't a miracle, is it, that the real you should come here—should be here to-night?"

"The real me?" she repeated, not in the least understanding.

"I suppose it is a little puzzling. Of course, you couldn't know that I made believe you had been keeping a lonely man company in a lonely old tower ever since the first time he saw you."

Her pretty dark eyebrows went up in perplexity. "I don't think I know what you're talking about," she said a little petulantly, "and I'm not sure that you do, either."

But he was still under the enchantment of her ravishing presence, still a

little bewildered by the miracle which had been wrought.

"Then I think I'll show you," he cried, his voice vibrating with excitement. He hurried across the room and laid his hand upon the portrait which, earlier in the evening, he had turned with its face to the wall.

She was paying but scant attention to him. "I'm just a woman who has lost her way," she said. "I am the Comtesse De Savergne."

### CHAPTER V.

At the words, "I am the Comtesse De Savergne," Jack Hardy stood transfixed. His hand fell like lead from the canvas. Slowly he turned and advanced a step toward the pathetic figure upon the settle. And so his dream lady had faded away, back into the land of dreams! His whole soul was up in revolt. He felt that Fortune had made him the butt of a practical joke, and a very poor one at that. It was cruel, cruel to have all his fancy palaces tumbled about his ears like that. But still he must pull himself together. What mattered the past or the future? The present had to be faced. After all, Love was a terrible swindler, always calling upon Hope, who rarely honored his draft.

He forced himself to recover his equilibrium and said, with a husky break in his voice: "*You!* You are the Comtesse De Savergne! I might have known it." Then, with an attempt at cheerfulness and some formality in his manner, he added: "My name is Hardy, Jack Hardy. I'll be glad if I can be of any service to you."

Knowing nothing whatever of the stress of feeling that was racking him, she responded monotonously: "All I want is to be set on my road again."

He laughed, a queer strident laugh, and scarcely knowing what he was saying, but remembering subconsciously what the prince had told him, remarked:

"Oh, yes, you're looking for—though it scarcely seems serious enough to have brought you out to-night. Per-

haps you've heard the legend of this tower, how the De Savergnes once walled up a countess of the name here."

She shuddered as she looked into the fire, which seemed to be picturing scenes of horror to her eyes.

"Yes. It was because she told family secrets."

"I thought it might have been because she insisted on wandering through this breakneck valley, looking for a lost dog that has probably gone home of its own accord," he said flippantly, afraid at that moment to address her—his lady of dreams—in any other way.

"What in the world are you saying?" asked Nancy in blank amazement.

He was trying to ward off the effects of the unexpected blow which had been dealt him. Like *Desdemona*, he was not merry, but he did beguile the thing he was by seeming otherwise.

"Indirectly, I am talking about the dog you're looking for."

"Aren't you mistaking me for some one else?"

"Oh, no." And then, gently satirical, he proceeded to quote the prince: "You're the happiest woman in the world, though a roadside painter, catching a glimpse of you, mightn't have thought so. Ah, yes—and when you look most troubled you are planning a game of tennis. Also, you have, perhaps, too much of that good characteristic of our good race—self-reliance—and are too likely to act for yourself. You see, I know you quite well, Madame De Savergne, and I should say the description suited you pretty closely, from your coming on foot and alone to look for a lost dog to-night."

"Who told you that?" she demanded sharply.

"A friend of yours who was here a few moments ago looking for you."

With a joyful cry she started to her feet. "Oh, I see! It was an excuse to ask for me. I was to have met him at the shrine at the top of the hill, but I lost the road. Were a little boy and a nurse with him in the carriage?"

It was Hardy's turn to be puzzled, but he answered seriously:

"No, he was alone in an automobile, and I think he was rather alarmed about you—and your dog."

Her eyes widened. "In an automobile? Alone? Then it wasn't— Did you know him?"

"Yes, it was the Prince De Savergne."

She started violently, and a slow chill crept through her veins.

"The Prince De Savergne has been here?" she gasped.

"Just before you came."

"He told you this story—that I was looking for a lost dog?"

"Yes."

Her lips curled in a bitter smile. "I might have known he would try to cover it with ridicule," she said in a low, monotonous tone, as though speaking to herself.

Hardy was far from being a fool, and he saw that there was some mystery here. But as he gazed at the startled, exquisite face before him, the face of his lady of dreams, he then and there devoted himself to her service, and if she were in trouble he would help and defend her with all that there was in him of physical and mental strength.

"He was not the friend you were expecting to meet?" he asked, with gentle deference.

She did not answer the question, but said appealingly: "Won't you be good enough to show me the road that goes up to the shrine?"

"Somebody is waiting for you there."

"Yes, with a carriage. I shall be quite safe if you'll only help me that far."

He hesitated. "It's a mile of bad hill road," he said meditatively. "I could go up there for you."

She put out one hand imploringly. "Please listen," she pleaded, her sweet voice tremulous. "I'm sure you mean to be kind, but you don't understand. It's more important to me than I can tell you. I must go there myself somehow, and quickly."

Hardy was studying her intently. Although she was conscious of his

scrutiny, for some reason or other she did not resent it.

"The prince might come back this way in his car," he said tentatively.

"Yes, yes, he might," she cried, with a shudder, which told Hardy much. "Please, please, if it isn't too much to ask of you—"

"You'd rather not meet the prince?" "Oh, can't you see?" she exclaimed desperately.

"You're afraid of him," he returned gravely.

She nodded her head with a pitiful motion. "*So* afraid of him."

For an instant there was silence between them, broken only by the noise of the storm without. Then Hardy said with sudden determination:

"Madame De Savergne, I'm going to ask you an impertinent question. Are you running away?"

She flashed him a glance under her long lashes, and then smiled. It was the first time that Hardy had seen her smile, and he thought it the most bewitching thing in the world.

"Mr. Hardy, you invite an answer equally impertinent, but—" She paused an instant, and concluded archly: "I won't make it."

"You're afraid to meet the prince," he said directly, and with sudden energy, "and somebody's carriage is waiting for you at the top of the hill! Now, for a moment, won't you just think of the fact that I'm an American, that I'd do anything to help you, and tell me—well, doesn't it seem to you that you have told me too much—or too little?"

"What do you want to know?" she asked rather helplessly, impressed by his earnestness.

"I met your father and mother to-day," he began, "and I learned that you were the happiest woman in the world—"

"Oh," she interrupted, with a gleam of humor, "I would be if you'd show me to the top of that hill where my friend is waiting."

"Your friend is a man, you said?" he put in quickly.

"Yes."

They looked at each other steadily



for a moment; and then, reading his thought, she drew back in astonishment, and began to laugh deliciously.

"You—you don't mean to say you think— Oh, poor Albert!" She faced Hardy again, all smiles. "Mr. Hardy, I'm running away, but I'm not eloping."

He breathed a sigh of relief. "The happiest woman in the world running away!"

Instantaneously her expression changed, and she answered quickly, and very earnestly:

"And asking you to help her, Mr. Hardy." She went to him and laid her hand upon his arm; a touch, light though it was, which sent the blood tingling through his veins. "I haven't any way to show you that what I am doing is right. Of course, you don't understand. How could you, when my own—when nobody understands. Could you," falteringly, "could you believe that I had to do it, and—and—just help me?"

His answer was brief, but eminently satisfactory. "I could—and will," he declared, taking down a raincoat which was hanging against the wall.

She gazed at him with cheeks and eyes enkindled—a prey to an emotion she could not have explained, even to herself.

"And believe that I'll be grateful to you always, and always, and always," she added warmly. "Oh, if you'll only put me into my friend's hands, I will—"

"You're sure he's there?" asked Hardy, getting into his coat.

"He must be," she replied, consulting her watch. "I had to trust the kind, good soul to get my little boy and nurse out of the château."

Hardy put on a slouch hat, and picking up an old-fashioned lantern, lighted it. "I'll find that carriage, and see you safely to it," he said, with great determination.

She darted toward him and impulsively offered her hand. "Thank you, Mr. Hardy. As they used to say over home, you're all right! Oh—what's that?"

Some one was banging loudly, insistently, upon the door.

"It's probably your friend come to look for you," Hardy said reassuringly. "He could see my light from the top of the hill."

"No! No!" she cried, fright on every feature. "It might be the prince come back. Can't you—"

Hardy pointed to the door of the sleeping room. "Wait in there. If it's he, I'll get rid of him."

She quickly obeyed; while Hardy threw off his hat and coat and set the lantern down on an old-fashioned carved oak chest. Then he opened the door and admitted the dripping figure of Albert De Raimbault, who entered breathlessly.

"Monsieur," De Raimbault began without preamble, "you are the American who has hired the Tour De Saverigne, aren't you? I must ask you if you have seen a lady, also American, who might have got herself lost in these woods."

"Yes, perhaps," replied Hardy coldly.

"You have seen her?" excitedly.

"I think she might have been looking for a friend of hers."

"That is I! I am that friend."

Hardy fixed his eyes on the other's face, and scarcely removed them during the rest of the interview. He was determined to probe this young man to the depths—his character and his motives.

"You were to meet her?"

"At the top of that hill. I am the Vicomte Albert De Raimbault."

"I wanted to be sure you were the man. You've got the boy and his nurse, all right?"

The viscount started. "No," he replied shortly; "but the carriage is there. That is enough."

"Where are the nurse and the little boy?" insisted Hardy, with a sternness he could not quite keep out of his voice.

"*Mon Dieu!* Where did you see this lady?" impatiently.

"I'll tell you that when you tell me where the boy and his nurse are."

"But they are at the château where

they should be," snapped De Raimbault, infuriated.

"Why didn't you bring them?"

"You are very curious," with angry sneer.

Hardy's eyebrows came together in a threatening frown as he said slowly and determinedly: "I'm going to have my curiosity satisfied before I tell you which way she went."

The viscount threw out his hands in despair at this obstinacy. "Good heavens! We've no time! You are a man of the world; you should perceive. You see me, and you have seen a lady who is looking for me. Already there is pursuit. I have had to hide my carriage in the trees from an automobile which passed me on the search."

"But she told you to bring the nurse and the little boy. Why didn't you do it?"

"I have just called you a man of the world," returned De Raimbault disgustedly, raging at the delay. "It seems I was mistaken. How could I get those two from the château?"

"Didn't you tell her you would?"

"Monsieur, I shall go desperate to explain. Even if you are an American, have you no comprehension what one would promise a pretty woman who leaves her husband? Look at me again! Think of such a man in such an affair, with a Swiss nurse and a baby boy to his coat tails. All France would laugh when it hears the story; it would take a god to survive the ridicule. I am not a god. Baby boys and Swiss nurses! Do you think she will miss them? Tomorrow we are across the Alps; and once in Italy, where it is sunshine and music and flowers, she will forget all that has troubled her. Now, are you satisfied?"

"Yes, I'm satisfied," Hardy replied in a dull, cold monotone, exerting all his self-restraint to keep his fist from the face of the conceited libertine.

"Then where is the lady?" asked the viscount again, this time in a peremptory manner.

"She came here looking for the road to the top of the hill."

"But I have just come by that road."

"How do you know you didn't pass her?"

"Ah! In such a darkness one could pass a regiment." He moved toward the door.

"There's a footpath just to the left of the tower here," said Hardy, opening the door for him. "If you take that you will reach the carriage as soon as she will."

"I shall do so. *Mon Dieu!* What a night for an affair!" He turned up his coat collar, and, without a word of farewell, darted through the door.

Hardy closed it behind him, and stood for a minute in thought. He glanced toward the bedroom as if in doubt; then he turned resolutely to his desk, scribbled a note, and directed it to "Mr. or Mrs. Baxter." This done, he went to the kitchen, summoned Celestine, and explaining to her, not without compunction, the necessity of some one taking the note to the château, dispatched her on the errand.

As soon as he had seen Celestine off, well muffled up against the weather, and bearing the old-fashioned lantern, Hardy crossed to the bedroom door, and knocked softly.

The countess appeared immediately. "It was the prince?" she cried anxiously.

"No."

"Then who was it?"

For a moment Hardy did not reply.

"Who was it?" she repeated nervously.

"Madame De Saverigne," he began, as if measuring every word, "I know I annoyed you a while ago; now I must do it again."

"Only please, please hurry!"

"No," he replied, with the same liberation, "we can't hurry now."

"But why don't you answer my question? Who was it that came?"

"It was the friend you were expecting to meet," he answered levelly.

His mind was now made up; and, while he would have given his life's blood to spare her pain, he felt that his decision was irrevocable and he must go on ruthlessly to the end.

"Where is he?"

"I sent him away."

"You sent him for the carriage?"

"No; he won't be back."

She stared at him in amazement a moment, then cried accusingly:

"You didn't let him know I was here?"

"No."

"And you kept me from knowing he was here!" Her eyes flashed fire as she confronted him with angry condemnation. "You misled him! You misled us both! What for?"

Hardy lowered his eyes, but his voice was steady as he replied:

"I decided that you'd get along better without his help."

She stood aghast. "*You* decided!" she burst out. "What possible right had you to decide?"

"No right," he acknowledged quietly.

"I never knew anything so unparalleled!" She turned abruptly away.

"Where are you going?" he asked, worried.

"I'm going to find him."

"You couldn't. I know the path I set him on fairly well in daylight, but even I couldn't find him now."

"In spite of that I shall try," she announced, with a defiant tilt of her chin.

"Madame De Savergne," he protested, "your friend will be lucky if he finds himself before to-morrow. I give you my word it's quite useless."

But she refused to be dissuaded. "At least I can find the carriage with my little boy and his nurse," she said.

Hardy hesitated a moment. She was evidently far from suspecting the truth, and what effect would it have upon her when she knew it? But at last he concluded to venture something.

"Your friend didn't bring your little boy and the nurse," he told her bluntly.

"He failed?" she asked, still suspicious.

"Yes, he failed," he responded dryly.

"Then there's only one thing to do," she declared, with finality.

"I'm glad you see it."

She turned upon him in passionate protest. "Do you think I'll give up now and go back to the chateau? My

boy shall be sent to me. I couldn't spend another night there, I *couldn't*."

Hardy's whole heart went out to her. Every moment that he had been with this lovely woman, every glance of her dark eyes, every intonation of her musical voice, had but served to forge the links of love's chain. He knew now, past all peradventure, that she was the one woman to him, and that there would never be another. And yet he had to steel himself against any betrayal. So when he spoke it was very clearly and without the least quiver of emotion in his voice.

"I'm going to be impertinent again, and offer you some advice; that is, to sit down by the fire and get your shoes really dry."

But she had snatched up her wraps and was already at the door. "Thank you," she said curtly. "Good night, Mr. Hardy."

She must not be allowed to go. But how could he stop her?

"You said you were running away—not eloping," he cried quickly.

"Good night."

"That's what it will be called," he warned her sharply.

Something in his intonation as well as his words gave her pause. She halted abruptly and turned to face him. "An elopement?" she murmured dazedly.

"Precisely that," he affirmed steadily. "I don't question your right to go, I accept as truth all that you have told me; but you can't go now and not have it said, published, and believed that you have eloped."

The color rushed in a crimson flood to her cheeks. Whether it was anger against him or not he could not tell. She came impulsively forward.

"That I eloped with the Vicomte De Raimbault," she said, with bitter railery, "that I eloped with the one simple, honest soul I could turn to for help! Mr. Hardy, I believe you are even funnier than you are impertinent."

He winced at this. She had struck him on the quick. And before he could collect himself, he said with force:

"Wouldn't I seem still more foolish if I tried to tell you that your friend

isn't to be trusted as you've trusted him to-night?"

Startled, she looked at him with a quick, questioning glance; then parried his thrust by a counterquestion.

"Wouldn't that seem a little foolish to yourself—a man I'd never seen before acting as my protector against the one true friend who has shown real devotion for me? Ah!" as he made no reply. "Why should you have interfered?"

"Just because I am your protector for the moment against that one true friend and your own mistake," he said earnestly.

She felt a qualm at her heart. This young man had an honest face, he was her own countryman, and—yes, she liked and trusted him. Had she made a mistake? For the first time the possibility was borne in upon her.

Nevertheless she said lamely: "But you are doing harm with your protection. Why should you—"

The continuous strain was telling upon the artist. He interrupted her, speaking rapidly and very gravely:

"Does a man know why these things happen? I only know I have to do as I am doing." His voice sank into definite pleading, which touched her in spite of herself and struck some chord of her heartstrings which had not vibrated for years. "I took something on faith from you. Can't you take this on faith from me?"

But before she could reply there came again a knock on the door—a knock of authority.

"Ah!" cried Nancy, half triumphantly, a mischievous smile twitching the corners of her mouth. "Monsieur De Raimbault has found that path easier than you thought. He has come back for me!"

"If he has—"

"Please open your door and let him in."

"Will you wait in there?" asked Hardy, pointing with a troubled look to her former refuge.

"Thank you," replied Nancy gayly. "Not this time."

"You won't go with him?" implored Hardy.

"Ah," she said, still smiling, "it would have been so much simpler if you had shown me the way in the first place. But I'm not vindictive. I won't tell Monsieur De Raimbault how you delayed me. Open the door, please."

There was nothing for Hardy to do but obey, and he threw open the door.

Nancy's smile died away. Her face grew rigid, and she stared around with hunted eyes.

It was the Prince De Savergne!

He bowed low to the countess, and laid his hand on Hardy's shoulder.

"Did I not foretell that the countess' anxiety would bring her out, even in such wicked weather?" he cried; and then, turning laughingly to his niece-in-law: "My child, I am even such a prophet that I predicted to our young friend here that you might lose your way home and do him the honor to accept his hospitality. I foretold to *myself*, after I had gone, that I must stop here as I returned, and I could have foretold to you that you could not lose yourself anywhere so distantly that your good old uncle would not find you. Surely again you will not cause him this anxiety."

Nancy crushed back the fear with which this man always inspired her, and, without making any answer, moved toward the door; but the prince, as if by accident, stepped between her and it.

"You see," he said to Hardy, "she is still troubled over the loss of that little pet animal."

"I see," said Hardy gravely.

The prince turned again to Nancy.

"It is time we returned to the château."

"I'm not going there."

"She will not give up the search," exclaimed the prince in mock despair.

"No," she returned between her teeth, "I will not give up this—search."

"Your indulgent uncle is the last to oppose you," he declared, with an airy wave of his hand. "There is his motor car at your disposal."

"Thank you!"

He offered his arm.

"And his arm to lean upon."

"I do not need your help," said Nancy, starting to pass him.

But he deftly prevented her. "I am going with you."

"I do not mean to use your car," she cried angrily.

"What!" he laughed. "On foot again? And I with my rheumatism!"

"I told you I am not going with you!"

The prince smiled urbanely.

"The men of my family have always been the slaves of woman. My young friend," to Hardy, "can you spare a lantern?"

"My servant has taken it," replied Hardy. "I sent her on an errand."

Jack Hardy sensed vaguely that there was something closely approaching a tragedy beneath all this, and he wondered if, after all, he had done right to summon the Baxters.

The prince smiled, but it was a smile that recalled vividly to Hardy—Mephistopheles. So could that arch-fiend have smiled at his triumph over Marguerite!

"Then we shall detach a lamp from the automobile," the prince announced, with a sort of elegant burlesque, addressing Hardy. "From your window you shall see this will-o'-the-wisp staggering through the darkness, a sacred flame borne by a humble and romantic devotee of the goddess Caprice." He bowed to Nancy, who looked at him with pathetic indecision. "Let us be upon our pilgrimage. Since I must follow, I await your leading. We have the whole delectable night before us."

Nancy's eyes fell before his. She turned and walked slowly to the fireplace. The prince followed her.

"Couldn't you find a better weapon than ridicule?" she asked, choking a little.

Instantaneously the prince's manner changed, and he now spoke sharply, meaningly: "Many others, but none that I needed to use to-night."

He fixed her with his cold, uncompromising eyes. She felt stifled, and

she had to draw a long breath before she could speak.

"Ridicule hasn't sufficed," she said at last. "I suppose you're strong enough to follow me, but that's brute force, isn't it? Ridicule is only your goad. Do you think ridicule could make me go back to keep on bearing the things I can't bear? Endure the shame that was forced on me to-day?"

"Tut! Tut!" he scoffed. "We won't refer to that now."

"No! No! No!" she cried passionately. "Don't refer to it! Don't speak of it! Let such things be. Let them exist. Talk of them yourselves, but make it unmannerly for your wives to do so. But," in hopeless appeal, "what is a wife to do if she feels them?"

For the second time that evening there came the honk of an automobile. The storm had abated, and it was heard to stop outside.

"You hold a reception, Mr. Hardy," said the prince. "Others are coming."

Hardy paid no attention to him, but he said to Nancy:

"It is your father. I sent for him."

The prince, with an exclamation, cast a quick glance of approval at Hardy; then he threw off his coat and tossed it onto the chest. Crossing quickly to the phonograph, he set it going. The machine resumed "Way Down Upon the Suwanee River." He threw himself into a chair beside it, and, placing a cigarette between his lips, assumed an attitude of elaborate ease.

Hardy came close to the countess. "I am sorry," he murmured. "It was the only way." And then he opened the door, to admit Celestine, followed by Mr. and Mrs. Baxter.

Nancy rose to her feet. She felt as if entrapped, caught in meshes which she could not undo. She turned, with a gesture of despair, upon the smiling prince.

"Oh," she cried in a voice vibrant with emotion, "I think the woman the De Savergnes walled up in that room must have been glad when she thought of these stout walls protecting her

from the shame that had been around her. What a great peace she must have felt when she saw the last block put in place!"

## CHAPTER VI.

The family conclave which took place at noon the next day in the Château De Savergne could not, with truth, be described as an agreeable assemblage. There were present the old duchesse, grimly watchful, but scarcely speaking a word; the prince, all tact and smiling courtesy; the recalcitrant husband himself, apparently ready now to make any concession to avoid an open scandal; Mr. and Mrs. Baxter, and the Marquise De Montfort. The latter had demurred gently at being present, insisting that she would be *de trop*, but the prince had overruled her.

"No! No! On the contrary you are like one of the family. You know all the circumstances and are devoted to the countess. We should have your advice."

The prince then stated the case, very clearly and concisely, but without the least display of rancor. He regretted exceedingly the event which had led his beloved niece into taking such ill-advised action. Victor himself realized his error and had eliminated the person in question. She had returned to Paris. It was most essential that not a hint of any differences in the De Savergne family should reach the outside world. So invitations had been sent to the very oldest families in the neighborhood that night, in order that the marital felicity of the young count and countess might be seen. It, of course, was absolutely necessary that dear Nancy should appear at the head of her table. But also, she had obstinately refused to do so. No pleas, no arguments could move her. It was most distressing. What was to be done?

A rather fruitless discussion ensued, in which all took part except Mr. Baxter. To tell the truth, the good gentleman was becoming thoroughly dis-

gusted with the whole situation, and his sympathies inclined strongly toward his daughter. It was perhaps fortunate for him that his wife had no suspicion of this.

The duchesse suggested that Victor command his wife to appear, but this the young man declined to do. He did not feel that he could exercise his authority. Besides, he knew, as well, that it would be of no avail. At last the marquise ventured a suggestion.

"Since you have already let me intrude," she said modestly, "perhaps you'll forgive me when I say that the Prince De Savergne has made a mistake."

"It is possible," assented the prince gravely.

"You attack Nancy first with little whips," explained the marquise. "Then with big guns. You command, sting, thunder, tease, ridicule—you have even been so foolish as to reason. Never, never, never in this world, with all that, will you make her move one inch in a way she does not wish to go. I say you have missed the one great thing."

"And what is the one great thing?" asked the prince, with manifest interest.

"Her heart."

The prince struck his hands together. "Ah!" he exclaimed. "The woman finds it!"

"I know her," continued Madame De Montfort. "When you wish to get something from her, appeal to her sense of pity. Make her see that she is hurting you."

"I have already made every plea that a mother's heart—" began Mrs. Baxter plaintively.

"She will listen to me," asserted the marquise confidently.

"Again Renée has it," cried the prince. "The sympathetic woman friend can do more than mothers and fathers and the king with all his army."

And then the council broke up.

Ten minutes later Renée De Montfort sought and obtained admission to Nancy's boudoir. Nancy was seated, half reclining, on a low lounge. She



looked up inquiringly as her friend entered.

Renée crossed the room quickly, and, sitting down beside Nancy, gently took one of her hands. They made a charming picture, with their contrasting types of beauty.

"Dear one," said the marquise affectionately, "let me speak to you a little."

The lines about Nancy's mouth tightened. She had no wish to undergo any further ordeal.

"You're the only one who has spared me to-day," she said. "I had hoped you would be too good a friend. Besides," with a determined shake of the head, "I know all you would say."

"No, not all," denied Renée gently.

"You are going to tell me that I'm making everybody angry," said Nancy wearily.

"No, that you are making them unhappy." The words were spoken with no little emotion. The marquise pressed her two white hands to her bosom. "That you are hurting them here where they suffer."

"In their vanity," sneered Nancy.

"No, in their hearts. All of them suffer there."

Nancy made a movement of incredulity.

"The prince—you say he suffers in his heart?"

"Bitterly."

"I've heard him do nothing but mock."

"Mockery—that is the bandage he binds upon his wounds. You think we are cold and hard to you here. Ah, no! It is only our way to hide the great hurt to our hearts." There was a note of pleading in the really beautiful tones of her voice. "You are gentle. If you understood, you would not make such suffering."

"Nothing but injured vanity," insisted Nancy, with a contemptuous curl of her lips.

"Ah, little, blind child! Your eyes have seen so little——"

"No," interrupted Nancy impatiently. "They have seen too much."

"On the contrary, you close them to the pain you cause around you."

Nancy rose impatiently. "Please do not say any more."

But the marquise stretched out her arms in appeal, and went on with increased feeling:

"I must save you from your own remorse—what you will feel when some day you understand the pain you bring upon them now. I will——"

"Please! I don't want to hear any more."

The marquise, too, had risen, and, now, gliding to Nancy, she put her arms about her. "Listen to your own heart, my dear."

"Please be quiet!" returned Nancy sharply, as, with some violence, she wrested herself from the other's embrace, and walked over to the window.

Renée uttered a little cry as if she had received a blow. She gave one quick, keen glance at her friend, who was half turned away from her, and then, sinking down upon the sofa, she let her arms fall across its head in a broken attitude, murmuring falteringly:

"And I—I had no wish to offend. I meant only to be kind—to help her."

With a little moan, the head went down on the arms. If it were acting, then a great artist was lost in Renée De Montfort. For the tones, the pantomime, were worthy of the *Comédie Française*.

"Oh! I've hurt you," cried Nancy, filled with sudden remorse; and, running across the room, she knelt down by the sofa, throwing her arms about the recumbent figure.

Renée raised her head. "We have all the same pain," she murmured, half sobbing.

"Indeed, indeed, I'm sorry," said Nancy quickly and anxiously. "Oh, do forgive me! You know nothing in the world would make me hurt you. Please, Renée!"

The marquise hesitated a moment, and then said slowly: "But you hate those others. For me it is nothing, but I think of them, and I—I——" Sobs stopped her utterance.

Nancy rose unsteadily to her feet.

"Renée, what is it you want me to do?" she asked desperately.

The marquise turned to her vehemently. "I want you to be your true best self," she said earnestly. "I want you to be the Comtesse De Savergne."

"You mean to sacrifice my pride for theirs?"

"No," said Renée, rising and realizing that victory now was within her grasp. "I want you to be too proud not to yield your pride to their suffering. I want you to be too kind."

"You are right, Renée," said Nancy resignedly, convinced at last against her will. "I see it. What shall I do?"

There was a glint of triumph in the marquise's eye, which she could not wholly suppress. It was much to have won where others had signally failed!

"That—ah, that is our countess!" she cried. "Tell me that you will appear at the dinner they are giving to-night—that is the beginning."

"I'll come," consented Nancy chokingly. "I can't hurt them."

Half an hour later, no longer a self-constituted prisoner, Nancy went down to the terrace. It was a beautiful afternoon after the storm. The air was soft and balmy, and the Pic du Midi reared its proud crest, white and silvery, against the deep blue sky. Over the lower mountains darkness and sunshine seemed to chase each other with wonderful effect.

Below in the valley, peeping through the foliage, she could see the red roof of the tower where the artist had set up his studio. Drawing a low chair to the parapet, she sat down in it, and, fixing her eye on the bright spot of color, gave herself up to reviewing the occurrences of the night before. Persistently, one figure obtruded itself upon her mental vision. How kind, how chivalrous he had been, how thoughtful of her in every way! What a contrast to the men by whom she was now surrounded. Ah, there was nothing like an American gentleman, after all!

A shadow fell across the parapet. She turned to see Menga coming from

the avenue below and called to her. The woman approached respectfully.

"Madame?"

"Menga, bring Monsieur Edouard to me when he comes from his walk with Chabrol."

"Yes, madame."

"And, by the way, Menga, you told me yesterday that you knew that American gentleman, that painter, who lives in the Savergne tower?"

"Ach, yes!" cried the Swiss girl enthusiastically. "And he was always so kind, so good! That is why," hesitating a little, "I ask madame could she tell me something to help Meester Hardy?"

The countess looked at her in surprise. "I—help Mr. Hardy? How?"

"He has painted a picture of some one he loves."

"Painted a picture of some one he loves," repeated Nancy, with an odd little pang which she could not understand, and therefore resented.

"But her name he does not know," proceeded Menga eagerly. "He paint it from—from mem'ry, yes? Does madame know of the American lady who is not marry? It is impossible she is marry. Meester Hardy he is sure."

Nancy leaned back in her chair again, frowning a little.

"I've already discovered," she said rather tartly, "that Mr. Hardy is somewhat of a romantic imagination. I'm afraid I can't help him."

"Ach, no!" protested Menga, coming to the defense of her hero. "I never saw him so serious. If madame hears of any beautiful young American lady——"

"Yes, I'll try to remember."

"Madame is so kind. Thank you, madame."

The entrance of Albert De Raimbault put an end to the conversation, and Menga hastily retreated.

De Raimbault was quite a different-looking man from the one who had visited the artist's studio the previous evening. He was now spick and span in black trousers, patent-leather shoes, a white shirt, a dress tie, and a pink velvet smoking jacket. He rushed to-

ward Nancy, who had risen to receive him, and, seizing her hand, kissed it effusively.

"Ah, behold me!" he cried in an emotional voice.

"I'm so sorry you were lost," said Nancy commiseratingly.

"Lost!" he exclaimed vehemently. "Was I lost? What a tragedy! And I came back, bruised with fatigue, to meet with mockery from that wicked old De Savergne."

"He mocks us all," said Nancy gravely.

"He shall not mock me again!" shouted De Raimbault theatrically. "I have returned, still your servant, your slave, ready to obey again. The future still exists."

Nancy shook her head sorrowfully. "It's unlucky for any one to try to help me, Albert."

"But why?" he cried, still with the utmost exaggeration of speech and manner. "Except for that savage at the tower, by this time we should have been across the mountains into Italy." He again grasped her hand, again kissed it, and continued rapidly: "To-night we should have floated out into the lagoon in Venice under the moonlight. Other gondolas would have followed ours with music! I should have made you forget all this sad life, that some day you and I will leave behind us!"

Nancy was frightened, but still did not understand the significance of what he was saying. She drew away from him, but he followed her.

"Albert!"

"Why should I not speak what I feel?" he cried, following her. "I have restrained myself so long. I have had so horrible a time. Oh, that savage! But for him I should already have made you forget all sorrow, everything, everything but me!"

She gazed at him in abhorrence, stunned by the ghastly horror of the thing, of the terrible danger she now saw that she had run.

"I should have made you forget that little boy you could not take with you,"

he continued exaltedly. "I should have made you forget——"

"Oh! Oh!"

It was a long-drawn cry of concentrated repulsion. She darted past him to escape from the insult of his words, the contamination of his presence. But she was checked by the sudden appearance before her, in the doorway of the château, of a footman, who announced loudly:

"Monsieur Hardy!"

Regardless of all appearances, the overwrought young countess stretched out both hands to her visitor, as to a deliverer. "Oh, I am glad to see you!"

Not a little puzzled, Jack Hardy took her hands in a warm, reassuring pressure, and then released them.

"Was this too soon to call?" he asked.

"Not one second too soon!" she cried excitedly. "Oh, wasn't I wrong-headed last night? I've just found out what you saved me from!" She cast a lightning glance of loathing at De Raimbault, who folded his arms and glared at Hardy. "I feel as if I'd been in a bad dream of spiders, of ugly little animals running over my hand." She took her handkerchief and frantically rubbed her left hand, the one which Albert had kissed several times. "I ought to be ashamed to see you after the way I reproached you last night. I ought to have seen that you understood that absurd little creature you sent away. I've just learned what an idiot I was. I didn't know him. It makes me sick of myself to think I didn't know what he was! To think I liked him, to think I was stupid enough to trust him! Ugh!"

De Raimbault, who could not have avoided hearing all this, as indeed she intended he should, stood irresolute for an instant, and then, with as much dignity as he could muster, strode into the château.

With a sudden impulse, Nancy once more extended her hand. "Mr. Hardy, do you mind shaking my hand again? Shake it hard, please. That's it!" as he obeyed her. "I suppose I'd have understood about these spiders if I'd

grown up over here." She sank into a chair, and motioned Hardy to be seated. Then asked suddenly: "Where do you come from, Mr. Hardy?"

"My home now is in New York," he answered, drinking in her loveliness. "Of course, I wasn't born there; nobody is. I came from Minnesota."

"What was the name of the town?" "Minneapolis."

"Isn't that good?" she questioned delightedly. "Say some more names like that!"

He entered into her mood, understanding it. "You mean names like Michigan, and Wisconsin, and Iowa."

She chuckled gleefully, enthusiastically.

"Yes, and Kentucky, and Rhode Island, and Wheeling, West Virginia. Oh, don't they seem good? Don't they—"

She choked, seemingly about to break down, and then she said, speaking with the simplicity and earnestness of a child: "Can you think of something funny right quick? I'm afraid I'm going to cry if you can't."

"The only thing I can think of quickly," he laughed, "is 'When is a door not a door?' Of course, that isn't so very funny," he added apologetically.

"I think it will save me," she said, with an uncertain laugh. "You see, I began with you last night by nearly fainting, and then I almost cried. I don't want to cry now. I was really meant to be as cheerful as the Cheshire cat. I'm really not a crying sort of person at all."

"Madame De Savergne, I——"

"No, I'm not that, either!" she interrupted, shaking her head.

"Not the Comtesse De Savergne?" he exclaimed, in bewilderment.

"Not a bit of it!" she asseverated decidedly. "Never was, never will be! But I've got to pretend to be to keep from hurting so many people. I'm just a commonplace American girl on the wrong road. I'm just Nancy Baxter."

"Nancy Baxter," he repeated. "That sounds like home, doesn't it?"

She leaned toward him with eager eyes. "Oh, please say it again! I

never thought I'd have a chance to hear a good American call me Nancy Baxter as long as I live. Say it again, won't you, and put something else to it, as if you'd known me all my life and were just talking to me."

His whole heart went out to her. He knew just what she was longing hopelessly for. How naïve, how sweet, how appealing, how utterly charming she was!

"Nancy Baxter," he said quietly and very earnestly, "I'm awfully sorry for you. I'd give anything in the world to be of some use to you."

The words were out of his mouth before he realized that he had expressed more of his real feelings than he had intended—than he had any right to do.

"Oh!" she exclaimed, flushing. "Oh, but that was a wrong thing to say."

"Yes—I did not mean——" he stumbled. "It—it was very stupid——"

"No, no, it's sweet," she protested inconsistently. She rose hastily. "But—but I'm going to cry, after all."

"Madame La Comtesse is out on the terrace, monsieur," said some one from within the château.

Nancy cast an apprehensive glance toward the door, and then, moving toward the opening in the parapet, she said hastily: "Oh, please, would you mind walking with me out here? I don't want them to see me crying. Somehow, now, I don't mind so much if you do."

He caught his breath at these last words of hers, but before he could make any response, Baxter's voice was heard inside, inquiring:

"My daughter out there?"

Nancy paused and turned back in her flight.

"Oh, it's only papa," she said, with relief. "I don't mind if he does, either. After all," she added, with a radiant smile, "I think the storm has passed. What an April day!"

Baxter came hurrying out on the terrace. He wore a duster and a traveling cap. Under his arm he carried some smooth, flat object, wrapped in oilcloth.

"By George, Hardy, so there's where

you are!" he called out cheerily. "Well, I reckon I've been housebreaking." He placed the package in a standing position upon a chair, and waved his hand toward it. "There it is."

"There what is?" asked Hardy, although intuition told him. The corners of his mouth twitched spasmodically, and he clenched his teeth to stop the nervous, muscular contraction. He felt he must summon all his self-control to face the impending crisis, so that neither of the others should suspect his secret.

"I stopped by your studio," said Baxter, "went right in. Nobody home, but there it was, sitting right up there on the easel looking at me."

"Papa, what are you talking about?" exclaimed Nancy, glancing curiously at the oilcloth covering.

"The picture! I collared it. I want Mrs. Baxter to see it. It's the best thing I ever saw."

"You took one of Mr. Hardy's pictures without asking permission?" she reproached him lightly.

"One of his pictures!" he exploded. "I guess you know which one. Going to surprise us, were you?" He chuckled and shook his finger at her. "And you telling me you never met him until yesterday!"

Nancy looked the genuine surprise she felt. "But I never did meet him until yesterday," she protested.

Baxter whipped off the oilcloth and showed the portrait, which with Hardy had been a labor of love. "Then how did he do that?" he cried in triumphant refutation of her words. "It's the best likeness of you I ever saw."

Nancy looked and started, then her gaze flew to Hardy, but only for a second. Menga's words flashed before her: "He has painted a picture of some one he love!" There was a momentary blurring of her vision. Her eyelids fluttered and dropped, then rose again.

Hardy moistened his lips nervously. "It's only a memory sketch of your daughter," he explained to Baxter, to conceal his embarrassment. "I didn't even know who she was."

"And you did that from memory?" repeated Baxter in amazement and admiration.

"It wasn't difficult," Hardy said hastily. "I'd seen her several times; once in church; the way the light fell across the face interested me, it was a very novel effect, the kind of thing a painter sees. I ought to apologize for taking such a liberty with an unconscious sitter, but I couldn't resist getting that light."

He glanced at Nancy as he finished; but she was standing very quietly, leaning against the parapet, with downcast eyes and hands clasped in front of her.

"Well, I can't resist trying to get that picture," insisted her father. "It's Nancy, and I've got to have it."

Hardy covered the portrait with the oilcloth again, and put it under his arm.

"It's only a sketch, you know," he said half apologetically, and yet with an undercurrent of determination. "We painter men are about as conceited as people get, and we don't like to exhibit unfinished work."

Baxter looked at him reproachfully. "Well, then, will you do another for me?"

"Some day if I get the chance. But I must be off now. My old servant insists on my eating dinner rather early."

He shook hands with Baxter and bowed deferentially to Nancy. She raised her head, and for an instant their eyes met. There was no need for words; in that brief moment heart spoke to heart. They understood each other, understood with a mingling of joy and despair.

## CHAPTER VII.

"Renée!"

It was the half hour just before dinner, and Victor De Savergne, entering the library of the château, found the Marquise De Montfort sitting alone in the glow of the burning logs before the fireplace. He gave a quick glance around to assure himself that no one else was in the room and then came rapidly toward her.

"Renée, Renée, you wonderful wom-

an!" he said in a voice husky with genuine emotion. "You not only make men love you but women obey you."

"After this," she returned, smiling up at him as he bent over her, "I think you will have no trouble with your wife."

"You have performed the last sacrifice for me. I shall not forget."

"I hope not. It has not been easy." She sighed, and in that sigh was something of remorse, for the marquise was not a wholly conscienceless woman.

De Savergne laid one hand lightly on her shoulder, with a caressing gesture, and spoke very low and tenderly.

"Since that day two years ago when you and I for the first time learned what happiness is, I thought everything was perfect between us. I was wrong. The gratitude I have now teaches me how I have been in fault to you. You have suffered."

"Yes," she breathed sadly.

"Because you thought my whole heart was not yours. Renée, from this moment have no doubt of my faithfulness."

She glanced quickly at him, her eyes, blue as the cornflower, full of sudden hope. He was the one love of her life, wrong though she knew it to be, and she had been unhappy. "Ah, if that were possible!" she murmured.

"It is possible! To please my wife I had to pretend to send Diane Delage away from Fontenay. For you I shall not pretend. I will send her away. What I feel for Diane, it is nothing! I should be an ingrate to you if I did not send her away. I should despise myself!"

For the moment he was sincere, this butterfly of the high nobility of France. As much as he was capable of loving anybody outside of himself, he loved Renée De Montfort. And there was, moreover, a spice of danger in the affair which lent it piquancy. Careless and indifferent as Renée's husband was, he was a man who would brook no stain upon his honor, and Victor knew if the Marquis De Montfort's suspicions should ever be aroused, he himself was as good as a dead man. The marquise

was an expert both with sword and pistol, and was absolutely without nerves.

The marquise felt the ring of sincerity in De Savergne's voice, and she said, with a little gasp:

"If you make that sacrifice, Victor, I think our happiness will have a new beginning."

"It shall!" he whispered emphatically. And then he added, still almost under his breath: "You have smoothed away all this disturbance which might have grown serious for my family, and I want to show you what it means to me."

He went to the side of the fireplace, where, back of an oak panel, was a little safe. Drawing a key from his pocket, he opened the safe and extracted a small red box. Returning to her side, he laid the box upon the library table, opened it, and took out a necklace of exquisite pearls.

"See," he smiled, holding them out to her, "it is the necklace you have always admired. Will you take it just as a token of how I thank you?"

She sprang from her chair, a startled look on her handsome face.

"Victor!"

"It is yours," he said firmly, pressing the necklace upon her.

But she shrank back, evidently thoroughly frightened.

"No! No! No!"

De Savergne picked up the empty case, returned it to the receptacle behind the panel, and closed the latter. Then he came back to her side.

"It is a token between us of the new beginning," he said persuasively.

But she would not listen. "It is your wife's. It was given to her on her wedding day."

"For three generations it has been given to the De Savergne bride. It is not hers, it is the family's."

"But you are simple! Of all the jewels, the necklace!"

"Just because it is the finest, it is yours," he said, with a proud, loving glance at her.

The look moved her even more than the words, but she still temporized.



"For that very reason she would miss it."

He laughed easily. "She has not worn any of them since the first year of our marriage. Only yesterday she was here with my uncle. He begged her to wear this necklace; she threw it down into the box and cried out she would never look at it again."

Renée hesitated—the gleam of the pearls attracted her—and in that moment of hesitation she was lost.

"But I could not wear it," she objected weakly.

"Where she is you could not show it," he acknowledged, "but you can wear it—for me."

He threw the necklace about her neck, and before she could prevent it, fastened the clasp. She shivered a little, as with fright.

"It is adorable, but it is dangerous."

"No, no!"

"I am afraid of it, but I love it!" And she tucked it quickly away under the neck of her dress.

"Ah, Renée, how happy I am!" he cried triumphantly. "You will wear it always?"

"Yes," she whispered. "I swear it."

"Ah!" he breathed tenderly, and took her, unresisting, in his arms.

"Monsieur Edouard is there."

It was Nancy's voice in the next room.

With a little gasp of horror, Renée wrenched herself from Victor's embrace.

"She saw us!"

"No, no, no!"

"Ah, we do not know what she saw," panting with alarm.

"She saw nothing, I tell you. You must control yourself," he said sharply. "The people for dinner will be here. You must be calm, I say."

Again Nancy's voice was heard, close to the open portières which hung between the two rooms. "Don't keep him out too long, Menga."

"*Mon Dieu!*" gasped the marquise, glancing about like a hunted creature at bay. "I know I have become pale. She must not see me. Wait!"

She turned noiselessly and fled in the

other direction from which Nancy was approaching. Victor nonchalantly leaned against the side of the mantelpiece. In another moment his wife entered the room, closely followed by the prince, the duchesse, and Mr. and Mrs. Baxter, all in evening attire.

In spite of her more than usual pallor, Nancy was looking particularly lovely in a gown of yellow brocade and gold-embroidered laces, which was peculiarly becoming to her dark beauty. The prince bestowed upon her a look of approval as he advanced to her side.

"Ah, my niece," he said, with a genial smile, "you are going to be our good little girl." He glanced at Victor. "Both our children are going to be very good and live happily ever after."

"I didn't want to hurt anybody," said Nancy, with an uncertain quaver in her voice. "I couldn't do that."

"Our dinner is a celebration of it," proceeded the prince suavely. "The people will soon arrive, and you must come to receive them. But I will keep you here one moment first." Still speaking, he advanced to the chimney-piece. "I have thought of something very beautiful you can do—it will be so easy."

"What is it?" asked Nancy listlessly.

"Just be more beautiful. There are some pretty things here that will make you so."

He had unlocked the panel, and now came back with the red case in his hand. As Victor saw it, he caught his breath sharply. He started forward as if to check the prince, but stopped suddenly, seeing the danger of interference.

"I know your good heart will not let you refuse this favor to an old man," said the prince persuasively.

"Please don't ask me that," begged Nancy, forestalling the evident request. "It was only yesterday I told you I could never look at them again. Please don't ask me."

"Not wear her own family jewels!" ejaculated Mrs. Baxter indignantly, under her breath.

"My dear, I am very much in earnest," persisted the prince in level tones.

"People may have noticed you do not wear them. Some rumors of difficulties here may have floated out like little black butterflies. They will disappear if you are seen to-night in these jewels so distinctly of our family."

"I can't——" began Nancy, troubled, but the prince interrupted in the same quiet, determined, but still entreating manner:

"Not all. I would not load you with such armor—just two or three; the little coronet, the ruby brooch, the necklace."

Unable to withstrain himself longer, Victor came forward to the table.

"Do not insist," he said, with a significant glance at the prince, which the latter, clever as he was, was far from understanding. "She does not even wish to see them. She has already shown us so much consideration. Let me put them away."

He reached out his hand to take the box, but the prince drew it back. "You see," he said to Nancy, "your husband would not even ask it. Now will you not make him glad from your own good heart?"

She bowed her head in gentle submission. After all, what was to be gained by further discussion?

"I will. But not the others, please, just one——"

"Since it is to be only one," interposed the prince, pleased at his victory, petty though it was, "let it be the finest, the necklace."

"No," exclaimed Victor huskily, the color fading from his cheeks, "the other—the brooch."

But the prince waved him back.

"No, no, she is willing—the necklace." He passed the case to Nancy. "Ah, that is good! Put it on, my dear child. Our friends are arriving. We must be quick."

But there came a startled cry from Nancy.

"The necklace is gone!"

"What are you saying?" exclaimed the prince.

"The necklace is gone," she repeated in a dazed tone.

The prince hurriedly examined the

case, and then, unable to conceal his agitation, stammered: "It was there yesterday."

"Yes," said Nancy, a sudden suspicion forming in her mind, "for you showed it to me then. It has been taken. Only you and Victor have keys."

Victor was standing a little behind his wife, and, unseen by her, he made a sharp gesture of appeal to the prince. Like a flash, something, though not all, of the truth was revealed to the latter. A catastrophe was impending. He must avert it. Only he and Victor had keys. Ah!

"I—I had forgotten," he said in a shamefaced manner. "I took it."

"What for?" The question was addressed to the prince, but she had half turned and was looking with keen, inquisitorial gaze at her husband.

"I—the clasp was broken," the prince tried to explain, for once his coolness partially forsaking him. "I wished to have it repaired."

Nancy faced him with an expression that he did not like. "It wasn't broken yesterday."

"You did not notice, perhaps."

"Where did you take it?" in staccato-like tones.

"To the jeweler."

"What jeweler?"

"At Fontenay."

She made a quick gesture of scorn. "You haven't been to Fontenay! You haven't been away."

The prince's nervousness was increasing, but he strove to hide it. "Ah, must an old man's follies be exposed?" he said, with an attempt at plaintiveness. "I had hoped—but there—you force the confession—I have sent it away. Spare me, and do not ask to whom."

"It isn't true!" Her voice cut like steel.

"I beg your mercy—spare an old man's infatuation."

"Spare yourself!" contemptuously retorted Nancy, who was now thoroughly roused. "If you had sent it away, you would not have asked me to wear it just now. You are not a man

who forgets. Victor took it away! He took it with him when he went to Fontenay yesterday—to Diane Delage!"

The prince raised his hand in expostulation.

"Ah, but that is a monstrous suspicion!" he cried in a shocked voice.

"Not suspicion! Certainty!"

"He would never——"

"Then what has he done with it?" she interrupted curtly.

Victor, seeing that further denial was worse than useless, put in abruptly: "I shall not answer."

"Isn't that an answer?" Nancy demanded triumphantly of the prince.

"He is too proud to——"

But she would not hear him. She was weary of deceit.

"For the first time in your discipline of me you have blundered," she said, with biting sarcasm. "You should have talked to Victor before you planned to crown your triumph by making me wear a necklace so strangely missing."

Before he could answer, another voice broke into the discussion.

"Something is not right?"

It was the Marquise De Montfort, who had entered the room just in time to catch Nancy's last words, and who now came forward with evident apprehension.

"No," answered Nancy grimly, "something is wrong."

"Renée," said Victor hastily, "if you will withdraw for a moment——"

"No, she must stay," objected Nancy in a cold voice. Then, addressing the alarmed marquise, she continued with a bitter smile: "You are the emissary they sent to make an appeal to my heart."

"Yes," acknowledged Renée breathlessly. "They sent me."

"When I gave up to you," said Nancy in low, tense tones, "I didn't know all the shame. I've discovered it since. I know it now."

The marquise shrank back, as if stricken by a blow, and gasped through pallid lips:

"She saw! She saw!"

"There was a necklace in that box,"

proceeded Nancy, now in a clear, ringing voice, while the marquise involuntarily fumbled at her throat. "The Prince De Savergne says he sent it away; my husband refuses to answer." She turned upon Victor. "Do you think you can deceive me now? Do you think I do not know where it is? That necklace," with increasing vehemence, "which should have one day gone to his son, to his son's wife, is at this moment around the neck of his mistress!"

A queer little strangling sound came from the lips of the marquise.

"Ah!" she gasped. "You shall have it!" She tore open the neck of her dress and clutched the necklace.

"Renée!" exclaimed Victor, starting toward her.

"Have it?" murmured Nancy, dumfounded.

The marquise succeeded in detaching the necklace and held it out.

"Take it!" she said in a suffocating voice. "Take it back!"

For a long minute she and Nancy looked steadily at each other, a world of conflicting emotions in their breasts. Then, without another word, and amid the silence of the others, Renée crossed over to the table, and, dropping the necklace in the red case, sank down into a chair, and buried her white face in her hands.

No one moved or spoke. It seemed as if, for the moment, all life was suspended in the room. Then the tension was broken by the entrance of Menga, leading little Édouard by the hand.

"Monsieur Édouard comes to say good night," announced Menga.

Nancy turned and looked at them. Then she spoke imperiously, in a high, strained voice: "Bring his hat and cloak! Get him ready as quickly as you can!"

But the prince, who by this time had entirely recovered his usual coolness of demeanor, strode a step or two toward the nurse.

"Take the boy to bed," he commanded her.

"He's going with me!" declared Nancy, turning violently upon him.

"He's going to bed," was the unperturbable rejoinder.

"Do you think I'll leave without him?"

"As you like. He stays with us."

"Do you think I want him to grow up among you?" she cried passionately. "Do you think I'd let him? I'm not afraid of you any more. I'm not afraid of anything except staying in this house. And what do you think can stop me now from leaving it—and my boy with me?"

A derisive smile played about the prince's thin lips. "The wise and beneficent laws of this country which make a man the master of his children," he answered smoothly. "You may go where you please—appeal to the law and be taught. That child cannot take one step without his father's consent. Why, even this woman," indicating Menga, "knows that much. Take him to bed!" he ended sharply.

As Menga submissively took the little boy's hand and led him away, Nancy, with her eyes fixed on the prince's saturnine face, said between her teeth: "You think I'm alone. You think I have no one to help me. All right, but you won't beat me."

Up to this point the Baxters had taken no part in the discussion, but had listened to every word; Mrs. Baxter, with dismay; Mr. Baxter, with ever-increasing anger. But now Mrs. Baxter started up and rushed toward her daughter imploringly.

"Nancy, don't you realize that there are people waiting for dinner—guests in your house? Ira Baxter, will you assert yourself?"

"Yes, I will!" was the emphatic, if enigmatical, answer.

Nancy paid no attention to them. All fear had left her. She was a woman, roused by her wrongs, stung by insults—a woman resolute and determined. Facing the prince with raised head and erect form, her blazing eyes fixed steadfastly upon his, she poured forth a cascade of words, but each one clear-cut and distinct.

"This is the end of my senseless alliance! Oh, but the snobs are right to

call these things alliances—not marriages! Do you think a girl with American blood could ever be happy with a man she knows would not have married her if she hadn't paid him to do it? It's your title for our money! We throw in the girl—and her romance, and her right to a true husband and a happy motherhood. That's the exchange we pay. Why, I had a great-grandfather of my own, by chance." She turned rapidly to her mother. "Your father's father he was, though you've forgotten him. He was killed at Yorktown trying to drive snobishness out of our country. Oh, I think if he could have known what such people as you and I were going to do with the heritage he left us, he'd have cursed us with his dying breath!"

Greatly agitated, Mrs. Baxter clutched her husband violently by the arm. "You must command her!"

Then, to the amazement of everybody, Baxter rebelled. "I'll be damned if I do!" he shouted.

"What!" Mrs. Baxter staggered back, as dumfounded, perhaps, as she had ever been in her life.

Baxter strode forward to Nancy's side. There was an air of determination in his bearing that sat earnestly, if somewhat awkwardly, upon him.

"I'll be damned if I do!" he reiterated in thunderous tones. "Why, the kind of double cross I've seen here wouldn't even go on Wall Street. You've made a mess of the whole thing. You took the girl's life in your hands and you've botched the job. You're not going to spoil it any more. Nancy, you're not alone! I'm with you—I'll do anything on earth you tell me to!"

"Oh, papa!"

"Ira Baxter," shrieked Mrs. Baxter, almost delirious, "do you know—"

But Baxter raised his hand with a gesture of command. "Don't you see what you've got her into?" he vociferated, with tremendous emphasis. "Why, it's nothing but a slum!"

With a cry of rapture, the tears now streaming down her cheeks, but radiant in spite of them, Nancy flung herself into her father's arms.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Figuratively speaking, there was a cloud, thick and apparently impenetrable, hanging over the Château De Savergne the next morning after the unfortunate, or, perhaps, from another point of view, fortunate exposé of the night before. In the first place, the young Countess De Savergne remained fixed in her resolve to take her son and leave the family into which she had married; on the other hand, the Prince De Savergne, while he no longer opposed the departure of his niece-in-law, was equally resolved that the youngest scion of the De Saverignes should not accompany her.

The dinner had, perforce, taken place, because of the invited guests, and Nancy, by a great effort, had kept her promise and appeared at the head of the table; though she had excused herself immediately afterward on the plea of a headache. Later, in her boudoir, a long discussion had followed between herself and her father and mother. Baxter, thoroughly awake to the situation, was now heart and soul with his daughter; and his wife, after many tears and protestations, was forced to yield.

All through the conference, vital as it was to her, Nancy found one image constantly obtruding upon her mental vision, which caused her a strange commingling of pleasure and irritation. She had discovered the young artist's secret and was close to the discovery of her own. She had never really loved before—her feeling for the count had been but a passing fancy—but at last, at the call of the master, Galatea was waking into life!

And now, after breakfast, at the courteous request of the prince, his niece-in-law and the Baxters were with him in the library. He first informed them that the Marquise De Montfort—"our unfortunate Renée," as he called her—the Vicomte De Raimbault, and Victor had all left the château. What he did not tell them, however, was of the arrival, very early in the morning, of two gentlemen who bore an urgent

summons for Victor from the Marquis De Montfort. It was the sort of appointment that no French gentleman of honor could refuse to keep; and that was the reason of Victor's departure. De Raimbault had gone with him.

The prince proceeded to submit a proposition from the husband's side.

"First of all," he said, addressing himself to Nancy, "we feel that something is owing to you. We regret that certain things have happened. Victor regrets extremely." At this Nancy smiled with faint, cold amusement. "We admit he has a certain responsibility for the distressing scene of last evening. Through me he apologizes. We mean to be in every way respectful of your position as Comtesse De Savergne. It may be in your mind to attempt a legal proceeding. Any lawyer in Paris will tell you that in cases like this where the mother is a foreigner, our judges are especially strict in enforcing the control of the child by the father. You should understand, too, that our influence is not small. If we chose to exert our power, I think we could entirely exclude you from the society of my grandnephew, from this moment. But this is not our desire. We wish only to be assured of some tranquillity for ourselves. My nephew asks nothing for himself except that you will assume the manners of a woman of the world at the head of his table. If you will give us the assurance that you can maintain that attitude toward us, everything shall be as before; we obliterate the past, we overlook it. You shall be with the little boy at all times free."

He paused for a moment, and smiled benevolently upon them all.

"Now, think it over and see if you would wish to plunge into a mêlée of scandal, which could only end in the bitterest disappointment to yourselves. I think you will see that it would not be wise."

"Let's get down to business," said Baxter brusquely. "All Nancy wants is to take her boy and clear out. Now, if it's a question of money fixing anything—"

"My dear sir, my nephew is not indigent," protested the prince, quite well aware of the satire of his own statement.

"He ought not to be," rejoined Baxter, with scant courtesy; "but I thought he might have spent most of it by this time."

The prince rose with dignity. "The case is as I have said," he stated, with an air of finality. "It only remains for you to reflect."

For the first time since coming into the room Nancy spoke. "Suppose I do not accept, what is the alternative?"

"There is no alternative," replied the prince suavely, and, bowing courteously, he turned and left the room.

"Well, Nancy?" demanded Baxter in a crisp, businesslike tone.

Nancy's face hardened. "We'll try the alternative he overlooked," she announced with decision.

"Right!"

An hour later Baxter descended to the terrace. He glanced for a moment toward the artist's tower, and then his eyes fell upon the garden. The Swiss maid was there with little Edouard. But what especially attracted Baxter's attention was the presence of Chabrol, the prince's secretary, and two servants in livery. Evidently the child was being watched.

Baxter gulped with anger, and something very like dismay as well. This rendered the undertaking he had in view far more difficult than he had imagined. His indignation, however, was suddenly diverted.

"Hullo, there!" a voice cried cheerily. And Hardy appeared in the opening of the parapet.

Baxter turned quickly, a look of relief upon his face. Here was possible help, and American help at that.

"Hullo!" he returned briskly, advancing with outstretched hand. "By George, that's good! I was afraid my note wouldn't reach you before you left your studio."

Hardy looked grave. "I came as soon as I got it. This seems to be a pretty bad sort of mess."

"I guess the good Lord saw my mis-

ery here and sent one American into the wilderness that I could turn to," said Baxter, with emphasis.

"I'm glad He sent me, Mr. Baxter," returned Hardy, with a heartiness that evidenced his sincerity. "Have you formed any plan?"

"If you're willing to take the risk of getting your head broken in company with mine——" began the elder gentleman, with some hesitation.

"I'll let my head be broken any place yours is!"

Baxter smiled. "Then I think we'll pull out."

"Who's going to break our heads for us?" asked Hardy.

Baxter pointed to the garden below them. "Look yonder. See Nancy with little Eddie and the nurse?"

Hardy craned his neck to look over the parapet. "Yes, I see her."

"See that undertaker's assistant standing a little back of them?"

Hardy nodded.

"He's the watchdog. Then about thirty feet back of him, those two huskies in red velvet pants? That's the guard."

"I see them."

"There's a train for Brussels in an hour," continued Baxter, involuntarily lowering his voice. "The nurse will do what Nancy tells her, and Nancy is going to have her walk down to the châteaueau gates the other side of the garden, just before time for that train. If it wasn't for the watchdog, the two women and the boy could make a run for the cars and be in Brussels three hours later. It's an express from here on, and they'd be in another country before anybody could stop them."

"So those three men have got to be stopped?" mused Hardy interrogatively. "That's where we get our heads broken?"

"I know I'm good enough to look after the undertaker," snapped Baxter. "He'll never get away from me unless his whiskers come out. But I don't know as I could help much with the other two. I haven't been taking any regular exercise for a long time, and



"I——" He stopped with a plaintive gesture.

"I'll do all I can with the other two," said Hardy grimly. "I hope I——"

"What is it you hope, Mr. Hardy?" broke in a low, musical voice.

Unseen by the others, so absorbed were they in the project under discussion, Nancy had come up from the garden and was now at their side. Hardy caught his breath, and his heart struck like a hammer against his side as he noticed the pallor of her cheeks and the purple circles beneath the eyes. She must and should be saved from all the ghastly horror that surrounded her. Never did knight of old vow such fealty to any imprisoned ladylove as did now this young American for the harassed lady of his dreams.

"I don't hope," he cried in a ringing tone. "I know I can do it."

"He's going to take care of those two generals when you make your run," explained Baxter. "I wrote him a note and got him over on purpose. Nancy, I think you are going to get that train."

Nancy turned to Hardy.

"You think our plan to get out of the country to Brussels is a good one, Mr. Hardy?" she asked rather doubtfully.

Hardy was about to acquiesce, but suddenly changed his mind, and spoke briskly the thought that had come to him.

"Why shouldn't you go to Boulogne? It's only two hours away, and I noticed by the paper this morning that the *Amsterdam* sails from there at three this afternoon for New York. There's no train for Boulogne, but your automobile's in shape, isn't it, Mr. Baxter?"

"In bully order," excitedly. "By the Lord, if we could make that——"

Nancy's eyes were dancing, and the color had stolen again into her cheeks. "Oh, if we could!" Her voice was vibrant with hope. "But," with quick change of manner, "I thought of that, and I saw no way of accomplishing it. It would be the first thing they'd guess. The prince would telegraph the authorities at Boulogne, and we wouldn't be allowed to take Edouard on the boat." She smiled hopelessly. "If you could

only wall up the prince and his secretary in one of his own towers until after the boat had sailed! But as long as they're free to telegraph——"

"Then it's Brussels or nothing," broke in Hardy disconsolately.

"Yep!" decided Mr. Baxter. "They're keeping awful close to him. Well, if I, Ira J. Baxter, am left lying on the field of honor, they'll find some whiskers in my cold, clenched fingers."

He walked over to the parapet to note the exact position of the child and his guardians. Jack Hardy and the young countess were left, to all intents and purposes, alone.

She looked at him shyly, and said, half seriously, half mischievously:

"This time you're helping me—to elope—Mr. Hardy."

"This time it's planned right," he laughed, vainly striving to still his quickened pulse. "I'm very particular about elopements. They have to be just so!"

"You Americans do cling so absurdly to old-fashioned prejudices," she quoted, with an odd tremor in her voice.

"I had a half-brother who was caught playing croquet on Sunday," he pleaded in whimsical self-defense. "That's all I can say for myself."

She shot him a swift look from beneath her long lashes, a look surcharged with significance.

"I don't think you quite know what you've said for yourself, Mr. Hardy," she murmured a little breathlessly.

Before he could grasp her meaning, she had gone. He gazed after her, as she disappeared through the door of the château, a smoldering fire in his eyes, his whole soul up in arms, his whole heart crying out for the possession of this one woman in all the world.

Baxter came back from the parapet.

"Where's Nancy? Oh, gone to make preparations, I suppose. And I must do the same. I'll be back shortly." He held out his hand to Hardy. "I guess there ain't any need of saying thank you."

"No," said Hardy simply.

As Baxter turned to enter the châ-

teau, he came face to face with the Prince De Savergne.

"Ah, my good Bax-tair!" exclaimed the prince, with an ironical smile.

Baxter straightened up as if meditating violence, but controlled himself, and responded with ominous resignation: "All right!"

The prince watched him off, still with that sardonic smile, and then turned to Hardy, who had seated himself on the edge of the parapet.

"Ah, Monsieur Hardy," he remarked, with a shrug of his shoulders, "I fear some of your compatriots will never learn the art of taking life with grace."

"Mr. Baxter does seem to be rather worried," acknowledged Hardy carelessly.

The prince laughed, and, pulling a chair up beside his companion, seated himself. Hardy wondered, with considerable curiosity, what was to come next.

"My dear sir," began the prince, fixing his ferretlike, beady eyes upon the other's face, "there need be no more little lost dogs between us two. I know that you are acquainted with all these disagreeable absurdities which have taken place here. I comprehend how you regard them. By your action the other night, when you prevented a very foolish woman from doing a very foolish thing, I saw that you understood our point of view and sympathized with it. It is a relief to meet an intelligent man to whom one can speak freely. This poor Bax-tair is troubled about the Comtesse De Savergne. What nonsense! We wish her to be quite happy. But she must be happy in our way. She is only one; there are many of us, and centuries of us. Our little new person cannot upset all that. And yet we might have known beforehand that a little new person would try. After all—forgive me saying it—one goes to your country only to contract a suitable *mésalliance*."

With all the happiness in the world, Hardy could have struck the lean, saturnine face before him. But he determined above all things to be diplomatic. So he answered calmly:

"Yes; if they will come to Rome, they must live by the Roman law—so long as they stay."

"If my nephew's wife had had no child, she might have flown away—flown away." The prince waved his hand airily. "It would have made no difference, but now she is bound to us. Of course, it is in that foolish little head of hers to steal the boy. That is droll. We shall not prevent her."

Hardy could not repress a violent start of amazement.

"You'd let her take him away?" he gasped incredulously.

"As far as she could get," agreed the prince complacently. "To Italy, Switzerland, Belgium—it is all the same. A mere appeal to the authorities, and the child is at once restored to the custody of its father. It will be the same in any other country as in France."

Hardy waved his hand toward the garden below. "Then why are you having him watched so closely?" he demanded.

"Merely to be certain that I am informed when she starts. Once knowing that, this poor old uncle, accompanied by his trustworthy Chabrol, would make his way hastily but without ostentation to the train she had chosen; would hurriedly and discreetly seclude himself in the rear compartment of that same train, so that, when she reached her destination, she would find this weary and devoted head of the house with the honest Chabrol waiting to greet her on the platform."

"But why go to all that trouble?" asked Hardy, still puzzled.

"Ah, my very dear Hardy," was the bland rejoinder, "that would be important, would it not, if she is ever so ill-advised as to make an appeal to the law? It would be very compromising to her case that she had made an attempt to take the child from its father's custody."

Hardy nodded. He saw the point. Much as he detested the selfish old man, he could not but admire his shrewdness.

"An advantage we would be foolish to forego, and all so simple," went on

the prince. "The good old uncle of this fairy story has merely to slip himself into an unnoticed compartment of the train—a bizarre but amusing outing!"

"And the law is the same in all the countries over here, is it?"

"Your own is virtually the only exception. America is too young, I fear, to have learned wisdom in such a matter. But to America, of course, she cannot go. Her journey, if she tried, would end at the port of sailing; even if I fail to be on the same train, we stop her by the very useful telegraph. It is all very simple—she can do nothing. There it is, you see."

"Yes, I see." And he saw far more than the prince had the faintest suspicion of. New possibilities were opening up before him. His brain was working with lightninglike rapidity.

"It is refreshing to be frank," said the prince beamingly. "I know, of course, you would never speak."

"Certainly; you may be sure I shall not repeat what you have said to any one," lied the American; and his mendacity did not cause him the slightest qualm of conscience.

The prince rose. "But I must not monopolize your time. Has your card been sent to the comtesse?"

"I saw her."

"Then she means to rejoin you?"

"Yes."

"Till later, then."

Left alone, Hardy leaped down from the parapet, and, with furrowed brow and compressed lips, began to pace slowly up and down the terrace. Suddenly he paused in his aimless ramble. His face cleared, his expression of perplexity gave way to one of satisfaction. He had solved the problem. Andromeda must be rescued from the dragon, and he felt himself the Perseus to do it! He struck his hands together, and a low exclamation of gratification escaped from his lips. Without an instant's hesitation, he ran down the flight of stone steps that led to the garden where Menga was sitting under the trees, with the little boy playing a short distance away. Chabrol and the guards

l lounged about where they could see everything, though they were out of earshot. Menga rose as Hardy came toward her.

"Meester Hardy," she said glancing nervously over her shoulder at Chabrol and his aids, "I am happy you come; to have the chance, yes, to say good-by. I so hope I get the chance to see you again some time."

"Menga, has Madame De Savergne told you exactly what to do?" Hardy demanded with brusque irrelevancy.

"Oh, but yes, monsieur. I am to walk with Monsieur Edouard by the château gates. When the train comes in the station, so close by, Madame De Savergne must run down around the path. She and me, we take the little boy by his each hand and run and jump on that train. Such time when Meester Baxter he must choke Monsieur Chabrol, and you those two mans. Oh, Meester Hardy, I remember how in Chamonix you did with that guide that did not help when Conrad was in the ice, and it makes me afraid."

"Don't you be afraid—"

"Ach! No, not for you, Meester Hardy," she interrupted eagerly. "It is for those mans. They do not know what soon happens to them. Oh, Meester Hardy, please be very careful with those poor mans. The law it is so strict about killing anybody. Just so they cannot speak till the train is gone, yes? Madame De Savergne, Monsieur Edouard, and me, we never stop before Brussels. I got it right, yes, Meester Hardy?"

Hardy laid his hand kindly upon her shoulder, and spoke very earnestly and distinctly:

"Menga, I want you to do absolutely nothing to-day that I don't tell you to do. Will you remember that—not one thing?"

"Oh, yes, monsieur," she agreed promptly.

"And whatever I tell you to do, do it without asking any questions."

"Yes, monsieur."

He paused a moment, and then proceeded impressively: "Very well, then. Go in and tell the prince that Madame

De Savergne intends to take that train to Brussels, and that you and Edouard are going with her."

Menga started back and gazed at him as if she could not believe her ears.

"Tell the prince!" she faltered. "I am to tell him?"

"Tell him she's told you to be ready at the château gates. Tell him nothing else. Don't speak of me, but ask him what you shall do."

"*Ach!*" cried the woman, horrified and rebellious. "Meester Hardy—you ask me to tell that to the Prince De Savergne—I am to be ingrate, false to my lady!"

"Now, see here, Menga," he answered somewhat impatiently. "I haven't got time to—"

"I thought you like to help her!" she broke out indignantly. "I thought you was sorry for her!"

"Go and do as I say," he commanded sternly.

But the loyal creature demurred; treachery—and what was this but treachery of the blackest kind?—was not in her make-up.

"I got too much feelings for that poor lady," she wailed. "I cannot! You do not know her so many troubles—servants know. I cannot do it!"

Again Hardy laid his hand upon her shoulder, but this time roughly.

"Yes, you will, and mighty quick, too."

"No, I cannot. *Ach*, Meester Hardy!"

"Oh, Lord!" he cried. "I suppose it's a good thing I did pull your brother Conrad out of the ice, after all."

Her face softened, but she held out her hands supplicatingly.

"Meester Hardy, do not, please, yes, do not make me think of that!"

"Yes, I will, too," doggedly. "Just this once in your life, remember that you do owe me something."

He hated himself for this appeal to her gratitude, but the situation was desperate, valuable time was flying, and there seemed no other way out of it.

"*Ach! Ach!*" she moaned. But he knew she was yielding.

"Go and get it over." This time there was a note of entreaty in his command.

"*Ach!* The poor lady! She had such hopes!"

"Do you think I'd act against her? Tell him exactly what I told you, and no more."

"Yes," she agreed despairingly. "I tell him."

"Quick, then—on the jump!"

Hardy breathed a sigh of satisfaction as he saw her disappear into the château. The first step toward the freeing of his lady was taken. Diplomacy and audacity, and again diplomacy and audacity, and always diplomacy and audacity! That must be the watchword now.

## CHAPTER IX.

Fifteen minutes later, Mr. and Mrs. Baxter, both in traveling costume, were standing on the terrace, when Hardy hurriedly joined them.

"Mr. Baxter," he said quickly, "tell your man to get out your automobile. You get whatever bags you've got packed into it without being seen. Have him run the machine behind the château, then take the turn and go straight out on the Fontenay road. Half a mile along he'll see another road intersecting. Tell him to take it, turning to the right. This crosses the railway tracks a quarter of a mile above, and, of course, out of sight of the station, and then runs down through a thick wood paralleling the tracks. There are two platforms at the station, you know, one on each side, each with its waiting room and booking office. If he follows these directions carefully, he can make the station on the opposite side from the platform where the Brussels express comes in without attracting any attention. Once there, the waiting room will hide him from sight, as everybody will be on the other platform waiting for the express. He ought to make it in twenty minutes, if he starts at once. I want him there before certain passengers arrive whose suspicions might be aroused if they *heard* an automobile, even if they couldn't see one. Is this clear?"

"It's clear enough; but what's it all for?" demanded Baxter in surprise.

"Well," said Hardy succinctly, "there may be a sudden change in your daughter's plans."

"It's too late to change them," protested Baxter.

"Now, please don't argue, Mr. Baxter. Believe me, I know what I'm about. Leave it all to me, and you won't regret it, I promise you."

Baxter gave the young man a searching look, and then, evidently satisfied, he nodded. "All right," he acquiesced, starting off, "I'll tell the chauffeur."

Hardy now felt that the success of his plan was assured. He had seen Menga after her interview with the prince, and she had told him, with many expressions of bewilderment, that the prince had instructed her to go ahead, and to say nothing to anybody about her having spoken to him; also, that he had ordered her to tell Monsieur Chabrol to come to him at once, and to send away the two menservants, as there was no longer any need to watch the child. "He seem so pleased," she commented piteously. "He smile, he nod his head, he say: 'Good, good, good!' I do not comprehend. I hope I get forgiveness if I done wrong."

Hardy had reassured her as best he could, with the little time at his disposal, and had then given her further instructions. Now all was in readiness for the last coup.

Baxter was back in an incredibly short space of time. "The car'll be there," he announced. "I suppose you know what you want it for."

"Yes, I do," Hardy assured him with cheerful confidence.

"Then we're only waiting for Nancy to give the word. Oh, here she is."

Hardy's heart, a most unruly member these days, leaped at the sight of the gray-clad figure that emerged from the chateau, followed by Menga leading little Edouard by the hand.

"Ready, father?"

"Yes, but"—noticing that the guards were no longer with the nurse and boy—"where the de—where's the undertaker? Where are those two generals?"

"The prince sent for Chabrol and the servants," explained Hardy, his eyes fixed avidly upon Nancy. "The guard is withdrawn."

"It's a providence," cried Nancy excitedly, "clearing the coast himself just at this moment—just when we needed them out of the way! There's nothing to fear now. Our enemy himself has saved us. Go, Menga!"

The woman started to obey, but halted uncertainly at the unexpected appearance of the prince and Chabrol, both in hats and light overcoats.

"Ah, our little man goes for a stroll, does he?" In both the prince's manner and his voice was an undercurrent of triumphant excitement. "That is good. He should have exercise for his health."

"Go! Go!" whispered Nancy to Menga hoarsely.

"Do not let me detain him," said the prince easily, catching the injunction.

"We shall not!" retorted Nancy with spirit, her dark eyes flashing defiance. "Go, Menga, I tell you!"

Menga hesitated a moment, and then, leading the puzzled boy, hurriedly began to descend the steps.

The prince followed them to the edge of the parapet.

"That is good," he said pleasantly. "Let him take his little walk. And you, my dear countess, are you not going with them? Do not let me keep you."

Nancy did not comprehend his attitude in the least, but her blood was up, and she did not flinch. "You're not!" she flung at him; and then, beneath her breath: "And you won't!"

The prince descended a step or two, and then turned back for a moment.

"For myself I must make excuses that a little absence shall keep me from you for a short time," he said in that oily way which Nancy loathed. "My carriage is waiting in the courtyard; I need to take the air, I and my good Chabrol. It may be rather a long drive. I trust you will all excuse me, particularly my niece, Madame De Saverigne. I shall hope to make a more ample excuse to her when I see her again in"—he paused and smiled in-

scrutably, as he bowed himself away—"in perhaps three hours! *Au revoir.*"

No one but Jack Hardy understood the veiled significance of the last words, and he smiled grimly at the thought of how the wily old man had been fooled and of the disappointment in store for him.

"Nothing, nothing between us and Brussels!" cried Nancy tensely. "Come, let us go."

Hardy raised a restraining hand. "Don't move," he commanded sharply. "Stay where you are! The carriage is driving out of the courtyard. Wait!"

"Wait!" Nancy exclaimed. "We can't. It's time to start for the station."

"You can't go to Brussels," he asserted peremptorily. "They'd take your boy away from you there just as they would here. There's only one country on earth where you're sure to keep him—and that's your own."

"But I can't get there," said Nancy anxiously. "Don't you understand, I must be on this train, Edouard will be—"

"Yes, I understand," Hardy interposed quietly. "And, for that matter, you must all be on the train; or rather, the prince must believe you are, must see you board it. Listen. He thinks I sympathize with his viewpoints, his ideas, and he was kind enough to make me his confidant. He believes you are going to take that train, and therefore intends to do so himself unknown to you; he and Chabrol, both of them. His drive is, of course, only a pretense, but since you are not supposed to know that, you assume, naturally, that the coast is quite clear. This is what he expects you to do, so we will act accordingly—it has the advantage of saving us the inconvenience of any attempt at stealth in going to the station. Menga will already be on the platform with Edouard by now, and—"

"And so will the prince," broke in Nancy, almost in tears as she saw her escape being cut off. "We are walking into his trap. Why didn't you tell us this before—before—"

"Just a minute, please," Hardy in-

terrupted gently. "Yes, the prince and Chabrol will undoubtedly be there, though they will take good care not to be seen by you if they can prevent it. When the train comes in, you will all enter a compartment in one of the forward carriages. Your esteemed uncle, when he sees you do this, will imitate your example in one at the rear."

"And then," cried Nancy, "then—"

"Then," said Hardy grimly, "just as the train starts, Mr. Baxter will lower the window on the far side of your compartment, open the door, and you will all step out; while I remain on the footboard, completely blocking the view from the platform as I lean in to say my adieu—in case Chabrol, at the last instant, should be sent down the platform to make assurance doubly sure. You have only to cross the track and pass through the waiting room on the other platform to your automobile, which is standing there. The prince will be on the way to Brussels, on an express that makes no stops. He can't get back here for six hours, he can't even telegraph for three. Your road to Boulogne, to the New York boat, to America, is clear."

Baxter's hand came down with a thump on Hardy's back. "Young man," he cried hilariously, "you could beat Wall Street to a frazzle! By Jove, you're a corker!"

"Shall we go?" suggested Hardy quietly. "There is just about time."

"Oh, but all my things!" protested Mrs. Baxter.

"All the things you'll take are in the car," said her husband sturdily, grasping her arm.

Mrs. Baxter started forward reluctantly. "It—it seems as though the heavens would fall next," she complained tearfully.

"Humph!" snorted Mr. Baxter. "It seems as if we were going to get little Eddie over to New York and teach him some darned good English!"

Nancy had not spoken. It had come upon her with sudden, subtle insistence, and she realized with all her soul that while this victory, now surely hers, might bring relief, it could never bring



the happiness she had dreamed of, longed for. Victory, the victory that Hardy had made possible, meant, too, that she was passing out of his life—that between them henceforward was endless separation. She dared not even lift her eyes to his, as she followed a little behind her parents.

Hardy, gravely, and as silently, walked beside her. And he, too, dared not trust himself to speak.

It was not long, that little walk, but it had spanned a lifetime for them both before the whistle of the train sounded in the distance, just as they reached the station. Hardy roused himself into action. Catching sight of Menga with little Edouard, he beckoned her to join the others, and then led the way toward the upper end of the platform. He smiled grimly to himself as once, turning suddenly, he caught sight of Chabrol far down at the other end behind a group of travelers, and behind him again the figure of the prince.

The next minute, with the arrival of the train, all was bustle and excitement. Hardy ran alongside the forward coaches, and, tipping the guard handsomely, secured an empty compartment into which he hurried his little party. He closed the door, mounted the footboard, and leaned in through the open window. Again, over his shoulder, he caught a glimpse of Chabrol, who had presumably approached to watch them and was now hastening back toward the rear of the train. Hardy followed the secretary with his eyes until he saw him enter what was evidently the prince's compartment, and then he turned quickly to Mr. Baxter.

"Now's your time," he cried, his voice sounding hoarse in his own ears. "Good-by—and God bless you all!"

Mr. Baxter reached out his hand for a last grasp, lowered the window on his side, opened the door, and stepped out. Mrs. Baxter followed, then Menga and the child.

A passion of tenderness leaped into flame in Hardy's heart. Nancy was facing him, her hands outstretched with a gesture that was full of unspoken

tragedy. A swift, indescribable light flashed in her beautiful eyes, lingered a moment, and was gone.

"I understand—I know," she was murmuring brokenly, catching her breath in little sobs. "And I—I am going to suffer, too!"

She whirled about, there was the quick frou-frou of silken skirts—and then the door closed softly upon an empty compartment.

Baxter's voice came guardedly from the other side. "Hardy! I say, Hardy! Why don't you come with us?"

"No," Hardy answered, scarcely above a whisper—his mouth was dry and parched, he could barely speak. "No, I go the other way."

The train was moving. He dropped to the platform. The carriages began to slip by him faster and faster. Some one leaned from a window and lifted his hat. It was the Prince De Savergne.

It was late that evening when Jack Hardy, smoking moodily in his studio and given up to gloomy contemplation, was roused from his reflections by the sudden flinging open of his door as Albert De Raimbault, wild-eyed, disheveled, and distraught, burst in upon him.

"The prince? The prince? Where is the prince?" gasped De Raimbault. "I could find no one at the château. Is he here?"

Hardy rose to his feet. "I believe the prince has gone to Brussels," he said shortly.

"To Brussels! *Mon Dieu!* Oh, this is terrible," De Raimbault cried, beginning to weep piteously. "Terrible!"

Hardy caught him rather roughly by the arm. Tears in a man were not to his liking.

"What is terrible? Pull yourself together, and tell me what has happened!"

"Victor!" moaned De Raimbault, wringing his hands. "Poor Victor!"

Hardy shook the other vigorously. "What's the matter with you, man?" he demanded sharply. "What about Victor?"

"Killed," mumbled De Raimbault

incoherently, "killed—in a duel with the—the Marquis De Montfort—he had discovered all—a jealous woman—Diane Delage. Oh, what will the prince say!"

Hardy's hand fell from the viscount's arm. His face flushed crimson; and then the color ebbed away, leaving him as pale as ivory. What all this meant thrust itself into his inner consciousness. She was free! Free! Free! That was the one, the only thought! It was like a bolt from the blue—such poetic justice, such dramatic retribution, that he could scarcely believe it to be true. Suddenly he be-

gan to laugh, uproariously, uncontrollably, like a drunken man.

De Raimbault stared at him in dumb amazement. What a way to take the news of an appalling tragedy! Oh, these foreigners!

Then, as suddenly, Hardy ceased his laughter.

"The *Amsterdam* has sailed, but there are other boats!" he cried exultantly, on his face the light that never was on land or sea. "Tell the prince I give up my tenancy of this tower at once—at once! I am not going the other way! I am going back to America! Do you hear? To America!"



## I TAKE YOUR LOVE

FOR a sword into my hand,  
For a sign above my door,  
For a word upon my mouth,  
For a way my feet before,

For the road, and the road's end,  
For the work, and for the dream,  
For the ship with straining sail,  
For the harbor lights that gleam,

For a rest beside the way,  
For a well of waters deep,  
For a cup of crystal clear,  
For a vision and a sleep,

For the upward-winding track,  
For the shining peaks above,  
For all time and for to-day,  
In God's name—I take your love.

HELEN LANYON.



**H**E walked into the room without knocking.

She sprang up from the desk where she was writing.

"Good heavens, I thought you said three!"

"I did; but then I thought I'd come at two."

He was pitching his hat and stick upon a chair in the corner and seemed to look upon the explanation as ample; when he turned she was close to him, her face uplifted. He took her in his arms and kissed her then, not in a specially enthusiastic manner, but still in a way that did fairly well.

"Do sit down," she said. He sat down. "And take me on your lap." He took her on his lap.

He drew rather a deep breath as he saw the smile upon her face. She clasped her hands around his neck, contemplated him fondly, and made him wonder with a rather more active wonder than usual what she was going to say.

But he was altogether startled by what she did say.

"When are we going to be married?" she asked, and the question almost caused him, who never started, to start.

But he collected himself quickly.

"I don't know when *you* are going to be married," he said, pleasantly enough. She laughed.

"Oh, do please kiss me."

He kissed her several times—still with the same lack of enthusiasm, but still in the way that did well enough.

When he stopped she laughed again and picked up the former question where she had left it.

"But I want to know when I'm going to be married," she said. "Do tell me."

"You'll have to ask some one else, then. I don't know any more when you're going to be married than the man in the moon does."

She opened her eyes at him widely, and he returned her look of mock amazement, but then she grew quite serious.

"Dear," she said, pushing his hair back with her finger tip, "what makes you talk in that silly way when you know perfectly well that we are going to be married, and that *very* soon?"

"Oh, are we? Since when?"

"Since ever so long."

"We can't possibly have been going to be married very soon since ever so long."

"Don't be exasperating."

"I'm naturally exasperating—have you never noticed that?"

"Have I? I should think that I had. I—"

He interrupted her. "If you are going to talk long I want to smoke."

"Shall I get you a cigarette?"

"I can't get one myself unless you get up first."

She sighed and rose. He rose, too, and went over by the chimneypiece, scratched a match, and began to light the cigarette.

"Is the clock right?" he queried.

"Just about. Why?"

"I've got to go at four."

"So soon? I thought you'd stay for tea."

"Oh, no."

She came over beside him and stood there, resting her face against his sleeve.

"Don't you think that I'd make a good wife?" she asked, looking thoughtfully into her own thoughtful eyes reflected in the mirror.

"The dearest, sweetest little wife in all the world. Only, you see, I don't want a wife." He took the cigarette out of his mouth and looked at it earnestly—quite as earnestly as she was now looking at him.

"Why not?"

"Because I don't want to be married. I like to sleep late."

"Well, I don't want to get up early."

"Oh, well, there are a lot of other reasons."

He removed his shoulder from under her face and went back and sat down.

"Are you coming?" he asked.

"Yes, of course." She was still more earnest now.

"You mustn't cry, you know," he said, making very light of her smallness, actually tilting the chair into a rocker.

"I'm not going to cry. Why should I cry? I can marry lots of other men."

She brushed her eyes with one hand.

"Then marry half a dozen or so. I'll give you a nice present every time." His tone was fairly jovial.

She clasped her hands about his neck again. He took the cigarette from between his lips, kissed her twice—and put it back. After a while, she spoke.

"I'm not a bit discouraged," she said—and sighed.

He continued to tilt the chair.

"When did you get here?" he asked presently.

"Monday."

"Monday!"

"Yes."

"Not last Monday?"

"Yes."

"Why didn't you let me know?"

"I didn't know that you were in town."

"Why didn't you ask some one?"

"Whom should I ask?"

"Or telephone the club?"

"I don't telephone clubs for men's addresses."

"How long are you going to stay?"

"I'm leaving to-morrow."

"To-morrow!"

"Yes."

"Oh, put it off!"

"I can't."

"Why not?"

"I'm sailing."

"Where?"

"Cherbourg."

"Oh! Oh, well, of course you can't put it off, then. How long will you be over there?"

"Until you come for me."

"You'll stay a long time, then. It'll pay you to marry and settle down while you're waiting. You're so keen on family life."

She laughed. "You're a very funny man," she said.

"Look out, you'll burn your hair on the cigarette."

"No, I won't—I'm being careful."

"All right, I'll let you burn yourself next time."

She took it out of his mouth at that, shook the ash off, and put it back.

"Won't you say 'Thank you'?" she said.

"But I didn't ask you to do it."

"No, but it's polite."

"But I'm not polite. That's one good reason why you should give up this fool idea of marrying me. And anyway you've never said 'Thank you' for this nice rocking you're getting."

"I'm very grateful, anyhow. I'm perfectly happy. You can't think how happy you're making me."

"Yes, I can. I know exactly how to make any woman happy."

"But how?"

"Just don't marry her."

"But you'll marry me some time; you know you will."

"I know I won't."

"Why? Don't you think I'm clever?"

"Very much too clever."

"That's nonsense. Don't you think I'd be good to you?"

"You'd kill me with kindness."

"Don't you know that you'd be a better man and lead a better life?"

"That's what I'm afraid of. That's exactly what I'm afraid of."

"Afraid of!"

"I don't want to be any better; I might get to be like you."

"Why do you joke over such serious things?"

"I'm not joking—I'm talking hard facts."

She laid her face down upon his shoulder. "I'm tired waiting," she said gently. "I want to be married. I want to be married very soon."

He threw the end of the cigarette away.

"Lift up your head," he said. "I want to get another."

"Another what?"

"Another cigarette, of course."

Again her sigh.

"Isn't it strange that I'm never discouraged about it all?" she said, watching his movements as he lit the second. "I think that I'm *wonderfully* hopeful."

"You're a genius at hoping," he asseverated.

"Will you kiss me again very soon?"

"As much as you like."

"You like to kiss me, don't you?"

"I certainly wouldn't kiss you if I didn't."

"Then why don't you want to marry me?"

"Simply because I don't want to be married."

"But *why* don't you want to be married?"

"Because I'm incorrigibly selfish and don't want to be bothered with a wife. There!"

She reflected. "I'm not discouraged," she said finally, "not a bit."

"You're very foolish not to be, for I shall *never* marry you."

She laughed in his face. "Every one knows that you never mean what you say."

"Well, I mean what I say now."

"No, you don't."

"Yes, I do."

"What—with me here on your lap?"

"I didn't ask you to sit on my lap."

"And with the way I love you?"

"I never asked you to love me."

She put her hands on either side of his face and looked deep into his calm, bright eyes.

"You are a very strange man," she said. "Where will all this end, I wonder."

"In a good friendship, I hope."

"When?"

"When you've married some other fellow."

"I shall never marry any one else."

She was turning a little pale.

"Yes, you will."

"No." She shook her head.

"Oh, yes, you will."

She was still looking into his eyes, and the tears were gathering slowly in her own.

"Why can't you love me?" she wondered.

"I don't know. But I can't. I can't love any woman."

She dropped her hands.

"And you—don't think—that you ever——" She stopped.

"I'm sure of it."

"Do you really mean that?"

"I really do."

They were very quiet for several seconds. Then she rose slowly and moved away. There was still silence in the room. It lasted and lasted.

"I'm not crying," she said finally from where she was standing with her back to him. "I'm fighting to make myself believe you—if I can."

"You must believe me."

"I know. But it's so hard to—be refused, when you're a woman."

"It's better for you a million times than if I married you."

"Why do you think so hardly of yourself?"

"Because I know myself."

Then he stood up and walked to the chair where his hat and stick lay. She turned quickly.

"Oh! You're going."

"I must. I don't want this to go on longer. And it's time for me to go."

"I suppose that you are sorry for me?"

"I'm sorry for your delusion."

She came nearer. "Are you going to kiss me good-by?" she asked.

"If you really want me to I will. But what is the use? You lose your head so."

The blood rose in her face; she drew back and held out her hand.

"Good-by," she said softly.

He shook hands with her and went out at once. She stood still where he had left her, and continued to stand there for a long, long time. Then she went to the chair where he had sat, knelt by it, and began to weep quietly.

Some one tapped, and then, seeing that the door was ajar, spoke:

"May I come in? They told me downstairs you were at home."

She did not rise. "Yes, come in."

He came in. It was another "he" this time.

"Good heavens, what's the trouble?"

Her face was hidden in the chair arm. "I've been refused—that's all."

"Refused—refused what?"

"Refused myself."

"I don't understand. Do get up."

"I don't want to. I'm weak with crying. I've cried ever since he left, and he's been gone ages."

The new man was standing over her, looking much troubled.

"Who's been gone ages?"

"The man I love—that man I've always loved—you know."

"Yes, I remember now. Was he here? Then what are you crying for?"

"What do I ever cry for but him?"

"What do I care about but him?"

"Do get up. Let me help you."

"Don't touch me. I'm too wretched. I don't want to move."

"But what has he done to make you so unhappy?"

"I tell you, he refused me. I asked him to marry me and he wouldn't have me."

"But I thought that he was going to marry you."

"So did I."

"You've always said so."

"I've always meant it, too."

"Do get up and have some tea. That'll make you feel better."

"You'll have to order it. I couldn't face the waiter."

"I can telephone the order."

"But he'll have to come in with it."

"Never mind, you can turn your back or be playing on the piano. What difference does it make anyhow?"

"It doesn't make any difference!" She got up from her knees.

"What a sight I must be—not that I care. I never shall care what I look like again in this world."

"Don't say that. Go in and bathe your eyes while I telephone for tea. I'm so glad I happened to come in; you might have cried yourself ill."

"I am ill; I feel as if I had been pounded. Oh, heavens, I never knew how men felt when women wouldn't have them before!"

"You know now how I felt."

"Did you feel as bad as this?"

"I felt worse."

"You couldn't have felt worse."

"Go and put cold water on your eyes; then we'll compare our rejections."

She moved toward the hall.

"You mustn't laugh," she said faintly.

"It's too serious—I feel too bad."

"I won't laugh. It's far too serious to ever laugh at, and I've never ceased to feel badly."

When she came back the tea tray was in place. She sat down before it with a heavy sigh.

"I'm glad I'm sailing to-morrow; this room reeks tragedy."

"I'm glad you're sailing to-morrow, too; getting out on the water's a great thing. You remember I sailed right after the first and second times that you refused me."

She put one lump of sugar in the cup and poured his tea. He took one lump of sugar and some—not "a little"—milk.

"Did it help you?" she asked, passing him the cup.

"Oh, it helped in a way. It keeps you alive."

"I don't believe you suffered as I do."



Why, I've always thought that I'd surely marry him."

"Yes. Well, I had been thinking for some time that I'd surely marry you. It cut just as deep."

"But you had no reason to suppose that I'd marry you."

"Had you any reason for supposing that he'd marry you?"

"Yes. He'd always seemed so happy with me."

"You've always seemed happy with me."

"But it was as a friend." She sighed again. "He says he'll be my friend," she added. "Dear, dear, how easily the one who refuses the other does take the whole of it!"

The man sipped his tea. "It seemed right enough in one way for you to refuse me," he said, "because it had always seemed rather too wonderful to think that you might have me. But I can't understand his refusing you. Think of being offered *you*! And of refusing!"

"I know. It was very stupid in him. I don't know whatever will happen to him now."

"Whatever it is he'll deserve it. Unless perhaps he changes his mind. Do you think there's any chance of that?"

"No, no. You should have seen and heard him. He'll *never* change his mind. He doesn't love me, and that's all there is about it. And I must bear it."

"Just as I am bearing it. Please for more tea."

She poured more tea for him.

"I never really sympathized with you before," she said, as she gave it to him. "My heart aches—it physically aches. Did yours?"

"Yes, and my head, too. But the ocean will help that, take my word for it."

"You think so?"

"I know it."

"It seems so strange to think it's all over."

"But are you sure that it is all over?"

"Why, what do you mean? Of course it's all over."

"I know you think that it's all over with him, but is it all over with you?"

"How do you mean?"

"Shan't you ask him again?"

"Ask him again! No! Why should I?"

"Some do. I did."

"You're a man. That's different."

"Yes, a man is different."

"I don't want to ever be refused again."

"It isn't nice," said the man. "Even a man doesn't like it, I assure you."

"Besides, it would be no use."

"You think that he knows his mind?"

"Heavens—yes!"

She poured herself some more tea.

"You might give me a little more," he suggested.

"Willingly."

Then she rested her chin on her hand and stared at him.

"Do you think that he ought to have kissed me when he was quite decided not to marry me?" she said.

"That depends on how he kissed you. There are so many kinds of kisses, you know."

"I don't know."

"No," hastily, "of course not. Still I think you must know that there would have been a difference had he meant to marry you."

"But I only know his kind; I've no standard of comparison."

He looked at her, bit his lip, and was silent.

"You must go presently," she said, after a pause of fifteen seconds. "I've lots to do. I'm sailing to-morrow."

"Yes," he said, "that reminds me of the real reason of my call. I came to tell you that I'm sailing to-morrow."

Her face flashed suddenly radiant. "On the same ship? On the same ship?"

"On the same ship."

"Oh, how nice! How lovely! How splendid! What a good time we'll have!"

His face grew bright at her enthusiasm.

"Are you as glad as that?" he asked.

"I'm gladder. You're just the one person in the world who can sympa-

thize with me completely. You know exactly how it feels. Oh, how happy we'll be!"

"Yes." He was smiling openly.

"And I shan't have to worry over his hearing of our being together and maybe being jealous. You know how that has always worried me?"

"No, you won't have to worry over that now."

"And we can walk up and down, and up and down, and comfort one another."

"Exactly so."

"And we'll each know just how sad the other is, and so we'll be considerate."

"Always."

He stood up—still biting his lips. She looked up into his face with a smile.

"When I was crying my heart out before you came in I wouldn't have believed that anything on earth could have helped me as you have."

"I'm so glad," murmured the man. "I wonder—might I kiss your hand for au revoir?"

"Yes." She held it out toward his. "He never kissed it, so there are no sad memories there."

He kissed her hand.

"Broken hearts are great things—aren't they?" he said, holding it in both his. "Don't you know, I'm glad that mine is broken, since yours is, too. It seems such a—such a sort of a bond, somehow."

"Y—yes," she said, blushing. "But—I think you'd better go now. I've to pack and—and we can talk about all that on the steamer."



## THE LILAC SEA

A COOL wind took me by the hand  
And led me on beguilingly,  
Until before me, broad and bland,  
Shimmered the lilac sea.

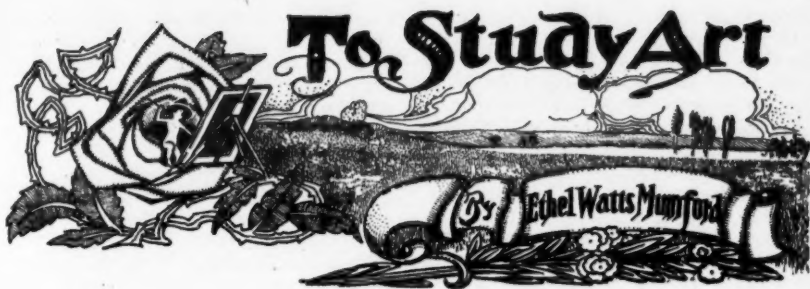
Great gulls, with mauve upon their wings,  
And cries that lingered hauntingly,  
Hovered, with graceful flutterings,  
Above the lilac sea.

The curving shore-line had the gleam  
Of amethyst; it seemed to me  
The ships were all like ships of dream  
Upon the lilac sea.

And naught was real, or near or far,  
And yet I have the memory  
Of twilight, and the vesper star  
Hung o'er the lilac sea!

CLINTON SCOLLARD.

# To Study Art

A decorative illustration featuring a large, stylized rose on the left, with a scroll on the right containing the author's name. The entire title and author information is framed by ornate, leafy scrollwork.

By Ethel Watts Mumford

**T**HE moment I laid eyes on Jack Evans' face I knew he was in trouble, as usual. I'd just cut him out of my will again, and I felt suddenly at a loss for further discipline to apply to the present case. He didn't give me long to think up anything. Catching sight of me as he came down the steps of the office building, where he hives with a myriad other lawyers, he fell upon me. That's one of the disconcerting things about my nephew; no matter how or when I cast him off, he falls back on me with the same affectionate enthusiasm.

"What's it now?" I demanded beligerently. "Another breach-of-promise suit?"

He blushed an unbecoming lavender shade that clashed with his red tie.

"Uncle Ned," said he, "if ever you hope to 'go where the good darkies go,' you come with me *now*. I'll blow you to lunch, and I'll tell you all about it. I've been proposed to."

"Why——" I began.

He misinterpreted me, and grinned ruefully.

"Because I'm the most ineligible young man the lady knows."

I must have looked my bewilderment, for he laughed more cheerfully.

"Come on," he commanded. "Not another word till we're settled at table."

We made our way hurriedly to the subterranean restaurant we habitually frequent.

"Now," said the Ineligible One,

spreading his napkin, "listen to this, and don't interrupt; my mind isn't strong after this morning's shock, and if you begin bothering me it may give way altogether." I attacked my oysters in silence. "I was up to my eyes in that Mullen brief, you know, when the office boy—that reminds me, I must discharge him—came and delivered himself of a wink and the information that a lady wanted to see me—Miss Thatcherly."

"Show the ladies in," said I, thinking, of course, if Marjie had come down it was with a chaperon. Johnny winked again, as if to call my bluff, and teetered out. Then Marjie arrived, *alone*, if you please——"

"You don't mean that Marjie——" I interrupted, agitatedly squeezing lemon juice all over my new waistcoat.

My nephew glanced at me reproachfully.

"She sat down," he continued, "saying she'd come to beg a very great favor of me. She had on one of those checked suits," he digressed reminiscently, "and she looked like a cherub dressed in a sponge bag. Of course, I told her to command me."

"Well," she said, not the least embarrassed, "I will. It's this way: My chum, Dorothy Wendel, is going abroad. She's fallen in love with her father's chauffeur. He's really awfully good-looking, and if he didn't drop his h's I wouldn't blame her. The family is wild about it—her falling in love, not his h's—and are packing her off in charge of an aunt. Now, you know,

Jack, I'm crazy to study art—I know I have heaps of talent—and they'll be in Paris all winter. Just think of it! And there isn't any possible chance of my going over, unless you'll help me."

"I didn't see how, or what I had to do with it, and said so.

"Why, make love to me, stupid! Go and tell father you want to marry me. They'll send me over quick as a wink."

"Say, Uncle Ned, what do you think of that? I'm stunned yet!

"Am I as bad as the chauffeur?" I asked.

"Oh, worse, much worse," said she. "You speak nicely, of course, but you are quite the most ineligible man I know."

"It seemed to dawn on her that perhaps she was breaking it to me rather brutally, so she dimpled and twinkled at me, and added: 'I told you it was a very great favor; and really and truly, I'll try not to make it too much of a bore to you. And I do so want to go to Paris and study art.'

"Uncle Ned, can you beat it? I looked sort of dizzy, and started to say something; but she cut me short, and went right on planning the campaign.

"They are going to sail in three weeks, so we haven't any time to lose. They would have sent Dorothy away before, but they couldn't get passage till then. She's at Lakewood under guard. And I'm ever and ever and ever so much obliged to you, Jack, for doing this for me. I'll do something nice for you some day, see if I don't. But you mustn't lose any time. Come to see me to-night. I won't go to Marion Gray's birthday dance; I'll say I have a headache. Then, when you come, I'll see you just the same. That'll make them suspicious right away."

"I told her I had an engagement. She told me to break it. So I broke it. What do you think of that? I'm in to rush that seventeen-year-old Machiavelli—rush her right off to Europe. She argues that her astute parents will at once see the advisability of taking advantage of the departure of the chauffeur-loving Dorothy and chaperon. My

general character, it seems, insures success."

My disreputable kinsman glowered at the "eggs benedictine" and reduced them to a scramble.

"That kid has made me feel like a convicted criminal," he growled, looking up at me with wistful eyes. He evidently hoped I would say something consoling. I didn't; so he said it himself.

"I know I've been mixed up in a lot of foolish messes, and I've got a lot of exaggerated publicity; but I'll be hanged if I ever did anything mean or dishonest."

"Neither did the chauffeur, as far as we know," I said benignly.

"Oh, puff!" he exclaimed disrespectfully, and scooped his change from the plate.

He rose and stood facing me. He is a good-looking chap, if I do say it, and at times he looks like me—he did then. He shrugged his shoulders like a Latin—a little way he has.

"Oh well, I might as well do somebody a good turn with my bad reputation." He took out a visiting card, wrote something on it with his fountain pen, and handed it over to me. "Uncle Ned, you go by a florist and send her a whacking big bunch of violets, with my card, will you? I haven't time. I've got to go back to the office."

That's the way he treats me, the scamp! A sort of uncle-of-all-work, not to mention that this will save him about seven dollars—not that he thinks of that. I wish he had a little more economy in his make-up. Oh, well—and Marjie, the little fox! I'm glad I'm a bachelor. Children are too much of a responsibility.

For two weeks I didn't see Jack, and I began to feel most unreasonably lonesome, so I trumped up a lame excuse, and had myself elevated to his office. I found him with a corrugated brow and a far-away expression. He sprang up and grasped my hand as if I were a life preserver and he a sinking mariner.

"Well," said I, "Nephew Don Quix-

ote, how is Dulcinea, and when does she sail?"

"Oh, wait till I tell you," he groaned. "Of all the messes! I was going over to find you to-day if you hadn't come in. What do you suppose, of all things—the family has accepted me!"

"They must be mad!" I exclaimed, but secretly I didn't blame them.

"They seemed to be surprised at the suddenness of it all," he went on, "but Marjie gave such an expert imitation of the soul of devotion that any one would have been convinced, and she wasn't hard to play up to. She's got a whole lot of charm, that little girl, and, well, I went after the old man last night, spoke about my infatuation for his daughter, and how unworthy I was, blackened myself up good and plenty, and waited for the storm to break. No storm—mild as a May morning.

"Pa Thatcherly was good enough to say that while I had been before the public at times quite unpleasantly, my crimes were mere peccadillos enlarged upon because of my exalted social position, and my golden prospects—he quite understood all that—and while Marjie was young, he believed in early marriages and disapproved of his daughter's art aspirations. In short, 'Bless you, my children!'

"Then my fiancée was called in. I tried to make signs at her to break the news that we were 'in wrong,' but the blow caught her unprepared. She looked at me, and blushed, and then she began to giggle. Pa Thatcherly took it for nervousness, and was paternally soothing. Can you see us, Uncle Ned? Can you imagine the situation?

"Then my future father-in-law considerably left us, and we looked at each other like a couple of trapped animals. Neither of us had ever dreamed of such a contingency. Then her nose wrinkled up and her eyes turned into two inverted crescents, and off she went again. From the way she laughed, they must have thought upstairs that she was having hysterics. It was funny, but I was too busy thinking of a way out to

really enjoy it. Finally I hit on an expedient.

"There is only one way to get you to Europe now," I told Marjie. "I shall have to ask your father to send you."

"Oh, but you can't tell him; he'd be furious," said she.

"Of course," I said, "but I'll put it this way: I feel that it isn't fair to you to let you decide. You are too young. I must insist that you go away for a year; satisfy yourself that you really care for me; you might change your mind, and it's only right to let you have the opportunity. I'll suggest that, as your school chum, Miss Wendel, is going abroad under the chaperonage of her aunt, it would be an excellent opportunity for you to put this, your first love, to the test. That I would feel better satisfied, not wishing to unduly hurry you into matrimony. I should consider it all my fault if, in the future, you came to hate me, or even achieved indifference. Then," I explained, "you can go to Paris, and, after a while, write home that you don't think you really are in love with me; that, perhaps, you were too hasty—and, of course, I'll tearfully release you."

"What did she say to that?" I demanded, unable longer to restrain my feelings.

The boy looked embarrassed.

"She said I was a dear, sweet, resourceful thing, and put her two arms about my neck and kissed me. And," he went on hastily, "I go up to the old man with that this afternoon—and may God have mercy on my soul! I'm on my way now; you can take me up as far as the Park in your motor, Uncle Ned."

I left him at the ornate portal of the Thatcherly mansion, and that was the last I saw of him for four days. Then he walked into my bachelor den with a certain bashful manner and a "don't-guy-me" look in his eye.

"Now what is it?" I launched at him gruffly.

"Well," he admitted, "she's promised me not to go away and study art."

Hang the boy! Now I'll have to change my will again!



#### SYNOPSIS OF PREVIOUS CHAPTERS.

Stirling Deane, the manager of a great mining corporation, finds that a former companion, Richard Sinclair, is claiming to be the owner of his chief property, the Little Anna Gold Mine. This claim he knows to be fraudulent, but Sinclair holds papers which may make trouble. Deane commissions Basil Rowan to see what he can do to obtain these papers. Rowan meets Sinclair. They quarrel and Rowan accidentally kills Sinclair. Rowan is tried, found guilty, and sentenced to death. All this, to the horror of Deane, who feels a keen responsibility in the matter. Deane is about to be married to Lady Olive Nunneley, and he dreads a scandal. Rowan's sister, Winifred, calls upon Deane and begs him to save her brother. He promises to do his best, and consults his lawyers, Messrs. Hardaway and Sons, whom he has already paid to defend Rowan. At last, after the expenditure of much time and money, Hardaway announces that a reprieve is certain. Deane goes away, for a rest, to a little seashore place, and establishes himself in an old coastguards' tower. He meets by chance a handsome girl named Ruby Sinclair and her uncle Mr. Saraby. Deane questions the latter and finds out that Ruby is Richard Sinclair's niece. She had received a letter from Sinclair a few weeks before saying that he would shortly be a rich man. One evening, during a storm, Deane is startled by the sudden appearance at the tower of Winifred Rowan.

#### CHAPTER XV.

**D**EANE was never quite sure how it had happened. The sudden crash of the storm, the vivid play of the lightning in the darkened room, the curious exultation which any outburst of nature seems to kindle in the forgotten places, had somehow generated a curious excitement—something electrical, incomprehensible, yet felt by both of them. His hands were still about her for a moment after she was in the room. It was perhaps a harmless instinct enough which caused her to draw a little nearer still to him with fear, as the thunder crashed overhead and the ground beneath their feet rocked.

Then there happened what he was never able to explain. She was in his arms, her panting breath fell hot upon his cheek, his lips were pressed to hers, before he even realized what was happening. Her head fell a little back, her lips seemed to meet his freely, unre-

sistingly. It was one of those moments of madness which seem to be born and die away, without reason, almost without volition. Deane himself was no Lothario. In his office he had talked kindly with this girl, and it had never occurred to him for a single second even to hold her hand in his. Her comings and goings, except for their association, had left him unmoved. Afterward, when he tried to think of it, his senses were simply benumbed. Yet the fact remained that she had come into his arms as though she had heard the call of his heart for her, that their lips had met with all the effortless certainty of fate.

The thunder ceased. She disengaged herself from his arms with a little cry. Her bosom was still heaving, her cheeks were white almost to ghastliness, with one little patch of brilliant color where his lips had rested for a moment. She tried to speak, but the words seemed stifled in her throat. He led her to a chair, arranged cushions for her back, and stood over her.



"Is there news?" he asked.

"None!" she faltered.

He shook his head. He was completely bewildered. "How did you find me out?" he asked. "What brings you here at this hour?"

"It is because there is no news," she cried, speaking with difficulty. "I cannot rest or sleep. Every moment that passes tears at my heartstrings. Life has become nothing but a living nightmare. Don't be angry with me that I came. I was obliged to do something or I should have gone mad."

"I am not angry," he said. "I am only amazed. I cannot understand why——"

"Oh, I found out where you were!" she said. "I did everything that was mean. I bribed some one to tell me. This morning I saw Basil. I think I came to him at a weak moment. The horror was in his eyes. I shrieked when I saw him. Even now when I think I must shriek. Mr. Deane, I have come to pray, to beg you to go back. You are very rich. There must be ways of saving him. You have influence with people. Go back and use it. What can you do here in the wilderness? It seems almost as though you had left him to die."

He stooped down and took her hands once more in his. "My dear little friend," he said, "remember what I told you in my office. Believe me, I should not have left London if the slightest doubt had remained as to your brother's safety. Never mind how I managed it. You had better not ask; you had better not know. But your brother will be reprieved. It is a certain thing."

She drew a long breath. Once more her face was at any rate human. The lightning filled the room with a sudden glare. She caught at him with a scream. "Oh! I am afraid, I am afraid!" she moaned.

He passed his arm around her reassuringly. "You are overwrought," he said. "You are almost at the end of your strength."

He poured out some brandy and water, and made her drink it. Her hand

shook so that he had to guide the glass to her lips.

"Listen," he said, "you must keep calm or you will be ill, and you will not be able to help your brother. Tell me, have you eaten anything to-day?"

"I don't remember," she gasped.

Deane rang the bell. "Something to eat," he ordered, "for one, as quickly as you can. And some wine—anything will do."

It was to the man's credit that he received his orders without comment or surprise. Once more they two were alone.

"If you have any faith in me," Deane said, "or any belief, remember what I have told you. Your brother is safe. To-morrow or the next day the reprieve will be signed."

"Say it again!" she gasped, clinging to his hand.

"To-morrow or the next day," he repeated firmly, "the reprieve will be signed. There can be no mistake. There will be none."

"Ah!" she murmured, half closing her eyes. "It was to hear you talk like this that I came. I could not have borne it alone for another second. Something in my head seemed to be giving way."

"The storm, too, is terrifying," he said. "You were fortunate not to be ten minutes later. Look!"

He led her to the window. Across the marsh was a darkness that was less of the atmosphere than of the falling torrents of rain—rain that fell in sheets, flung up again from the hard paths of the marshes in a white, fringe-like foam. Seaward, the waves had become breakers. The one white line had become a dozen.

"You would have been drowned," he said, leading her back to her chair.

"It is good of you," she said, "not to be angry. I ought not to have come. I know that. Only I was afraid. In London I should have gone mad."

The servant entered with a tray. Deane stood over her while she ate, walking up and down the room, talking in a disconnected manner of many things. Outside, the storm was passing away. Through the wide-open win-

dows fresh salt air came stealing into the room. Deane stood looking out for a few minutes, and then turned toward his visitor with an air of perplexity. She met his gaze, and her eyes suddenly filled with tears.

"Oh, I know I have been foolish," she said. "I am here and you don't know what to do with me. Isn't that what you were thinking? I have been very foolish," she added, with a sudden flood of color streaming into her cheeks. "But remember, when I came I was mad. You will remember that?"

"Yes," he answered reassuringly. "I will remember that."

There was an awkward silence. Deane felt that it would have been torture to her if he had alluded to that moment of madness, and yet it was hard altogether to avoid it.

"I am afraid," he said, "that you will have to put up with bachelor quarters to-night. You can have my room here. I have another which will do, but you would find it a little rough."

She looked at him timidly. "Couldn't I—get back to the village?"

He led her outside and pointed. The storm, coming with the full tide, had wrought a strange change in the face of the land. Up to the very top of the dikes was a turbulent waste of waters. The tower had been left as though upon an island. Nowhere in sight was any land to be seen.

"You see," Deane said to the girl, "it would not be safe to try and get to the village. The water is up to within a few inches of the dike, and in the half darkness one might easily make a false step. From here one cannot quite see, but I should imagine that the flood is over the village street."

She turned back toward the little graystone building. "If you will let me sleep in your sitting room, then," she said timidly. "I will not turn you out of your room."

He laughed. "My dear young lady," he said, "if any one in the world ever needed sleep to-night, it is you. I am going to send you up to lie down at once. You must promise me, promise faithfully, that you will remember what

I have said, that you will say this to yourself: 'The reprieve will come!' It is the truth, mind. Say that to yourself and sleep."

Then he touched the bell and spoke to his servant. "Grant, please make my room as habitable as possible for this young lady. We are on an island, and no one will be able to leave to-night. Put out anything of mine you think may be useful to her."

She turned toward him impulsively. "You are very good to me," she said.

"My dear Miss Rowan, I only wish that it were in my power——"

Then he stopped short. After all, it was not wise to tell her too much. He raised her fingers to his lips, and avoided, with a sudden twinge of self-reproach, the soft invitation of her timidly raised eyes.

"You must sleep well," he said, as he pointed the way up the stairs. "Remember, you can take what I have told you as a promise."

## CHAPTER XVI.

Morning dawned upon a land still as though from exhaustion. The long waves, sole remnant of the storm, came gliding in with a slow, lazy motion, and broke noiselessly upon the firm sands. The sky was blue. Of wind there was none at all. Inland, the flood tide was still high. Only the tops of the dikes were visible. Everywhere the sea had found its way into unexpected places. Little patches of the marsh from which it had just receded shone with a new glory—a green glitter like the sparkle of emeralds. Deane, who was out early, for his bed had been no more than a sofa, gave a little start of surprise as he opened the door and found Winifred Rowan standing on a little knoll by the side of the flagstaff, looking seaward.

She turned toward him at once with the sound of the opening door. He realized then, more completely than in the dusk of the evening, how great the strain of these last few days had been—the strain which had driven her into this strange journey. The black rings under her eyes seemed as though traced

with a pencil, her cheeks were thinner, there was something pathetic about the quick, startled look which flashed into her eyes at the sound of Deane's approaching footsteps.

"I am afraid," he said gravely, "that you have not slept."

"As much as usual," she answered. "Tell me, what time do your letters come?"

He looked inland. "Generally about eight. They may be a little later today."

She nodded. "I must go back," she said vacantly. "When is there a train?"

It was impossible to ask her to stop, and yet he felt all the pathos of sending her back to face alone the shadow of her terrible anxiety.

"There is no hurry," he said. "We will look out the trains after breakfast."

"Are you—going to stay here?" she asked anxiously.

"If I thought," he answered, "that there was the slightest thing I could do in London which I have not already done, I would go back by the first train this morning, but, indeed, you must remember what I told you last night. The matter is perfectly settled. In a few days he will know."

"It is those few days," she said softly, "which are so terrible."

It was hard to try and make use of any conventional phrase of reassurance. Deane, remembering how intense, how real and startling a thing this tragedy really was, found it hard, impossible, indeed.

"Tell me," he asked, "do you live absolutely alone?"

"Yes," she told him. "There was a cousin who was with me for some time, but she got a situation the other side of London, and had to move. I was in a boarding house," she continued, after a moment's hesitation, "until—this happened. Then all the people—well, they meant to be kind," she broke off, "but the woman who kept it thought I had better leave, and I suppose she was right."

"We will go in to breakfast," he said, a little abruptly.

Every moment he seemed to realize more completely the pathos of her position. They turned toward the house. Suddenly her fingers fell upon his arm. "Who is that?" she asked, pointing landward.

Deane followed her outstretched finger. Riding along the top of one of the dikes, as though unconscious of the sea flowing on either side, came a boy on a bicycle. The bicycle was painted red, and the boy had on a cap whose high peak gave it a semi-official look.

"He is coming here," said Deane. "It may be my letters. Or I think—"

He stopped short. He knew very well that it was a telegram the boy was bringing, but he almost feared to say anything which would bring hope into her face.

"It isn't—it couldn't be a telegram?" she asked, a little wistfully.

"It might be," he admitted. "I get a good many, of course."

He told the lie unblushingly. All the time he watched, with an anxiety which seemed incredible, for the coming of the messenger.

"You must remember," he said, "that even if this should be a telegram, I really do not expect any news yet."

She said nothing. She stood with parted lips by his side, and they watched the boy drive his bicycle along the sea-stained bank. Once he skidded, and she gave a little scream. Deane laughed at her, surprised to discover something unnatural in the sound.

"Well," he said, "we will meet the boy here. I am afraid you will find a few stock-exchange quotations inside the envelope, even if he should be—"

"It is a telegraph boy," she interrupted. "I can see the wallet."

She clung to his arm. Deane found himself patting her fragile hand with his strong fingers. He drew her arm through his, and led her a few steps farther forward. The boy jumped off his bicycle and opened his wallet, as he approached, with a familiar movement. Deane took the telegram into his fingers and tore it open. His arm suddenly went round her waist.

"Miss Rowan," he said, "be brave

and I will tell you some good news. See, you can read it for yourself. The reprieve is signed."

She suddenly fell a dead weight upon his arm, and almost as quickly she recovered herself. Her closed eyes were opened, she clung to him passionately.

"It is true?" she cried out.

He held the telegram in front of her face. "Read," he said. "'Reprieve signed last night. Will be communicated to Rowan this morning. HARD-  
WAY.' That is the name of my solicitor, so there is no possible doubt about it. The matter is ended."

He turned to the boy, who stood looking on with wooden face. Then he drew a coin from his pocket. "My young friend," he said, "you are in luck. Take that and go home to your breakfast."

The boy looked at the sovereign and up at Deane. So far as his features were capable of expression at all, they spoke of stupefaction. Then, as though afraid that Deane might change his mind, he mounted his bicycle and rode rapidly away.

"It is a relief to you, of course," Deane said, trying to speak in as matter-of-fact a tone as possible; "but this thing was a certainty all the time. I have always tried to make you believe that. Come in now, and let us have some breakfast. You ought to have an appetite."

She followed him without a word. She seemed, indeed, like a person dreaming, not wholly able to realize the things happening round her, even the moments that passed. Deane waited upon her at breakfast, and talked in a matter-of-fact way, accepting her monosyllabic answers as natural things—carrying on a conversation, too, with the man who waited at the sideboard. By degrees, a more natural expression came into her face. When at last the meal was over and the servant had left the room, she burst suddenly into tears. Deane took her outside and placed her in a chair, sitting by her side on the sands.

"Now," he said, "that is all over."

"When can I go back?" she asked

suddenly. "They will let me see Basil. I must go and tell him."

"He knows, of course," Deane replied, "but naturally he will want to see you. You can leave here in about an hour. I am not sure—perhaps I may come with you."

She sat there quietly, absolutely content to lie still and gaze out at the sea. Presently Grant came out with a note, which Deane silently opened. It was dated from The Cottage, Rakney.

DEAR MR. DEANE: My niece knows, and she insists upon going to London at once. We are all very much disturbed. If it is not troubling you too much when you are passing this way, we should be so grateful if you would call in for a minute.

Deane looked thoughtfully seaward, and his face hardened as he crumpled the note up in his hand. Then he rose to his feet. "I am going in to see about the trains for you," he said.

He hired a cart from the village, and they stood together on the platform of the nearest railway station, an hour or so later. She laid her arm upon his sleeve.

"Will you stop for a moment, please?" she said. "I am afraid I must have seemed ungracious. After all, I ought to be very grateful to you."

He shook his head. "No," he answered. "It is always I who must be your debtor. I ought to have been firmer with your brother when I sent him to this man Sinclair to make terms. It was a desperate enterprise, after all, and I ought to have realized the danger of your brother being tempted to use violence. To me he was nothing more than a unit of humanity, and I took him at his word. If he had brought me the paper I wanted, I was quite prepared to ask him no questions whatever, and he would have been a rich man. I can't help feeling that in a sense I am responsible for his present position and yours."

She looked away from him. Her eyes were fixed upon the horizon. She appeared to be steadily thinking the matter out. The wind blew little wisps of fair hair over her face. Her eyes

were steadfast, her forehead a little wrinkled. She seemed to be endeavoring to arrive at a conscientious decision.

"No," she said, after some time, "I cannot see that you are to blame. I am sure that it never entered into your head that my brother might be tempted to use violence."

Deane looked away with a little frown. In his heart he knew very well that he was not so sure. "Well," he said, "we will let that go. At any rate, my responsibility to you remains. Tell me what I can do? How can I help you?"

She shook her head. "I am going back to my work," she said. "I need no help."

"Your work?" he repeated.

She nodded, with a little sigh. "I am a typist," she said. "You know what that means—genteel starvation, long hours, gray days. Never mind, I am almost used to it."

"You need be a typist no longer unless you choose," he said. "Part of what I promised to your brother belongs to you."

She shook her head. "Don't speak of it!" she exclaimed. "I should feel that it was blood money."

"At least let me hear from you sometimes," he said. "Don't let me lose sight of you altogether while your brother is unable to help you."

She hesitated. Then, lifting her eyes to his, "I don't believe," she said softly, "that you would tell me anything that was not true."

"I don't believe that I should," he answered.

"Then tell me this," she said, "honestly. When you made my brother that offer, when you sent him to deal with this man Sinclair, can you tell me that you had not an idea in your mind that he might be led on to do something rash?"

Deane hesitated. He was not a man of overstrict scruples, but he hated lies. Somehow or other, it seemed to him impossible to look at this girl and tell her anything that was not the truth.

"I am not altogether sure," he answered. "At the back of my head there

was just the idea that your brother was desperate, that he would gain what he wanted, somehow or other."

She turned away, and walked a little way down the platform. The train was already in the station. She entered a carriage and sat in the farthest corner.

"Thank you," she said. "I am glad that you have told me the truth. Would you mind going away now, please?"

"I am sorry," Deane said simply. "Remember that I only did what ninety-nine men out of a hundred would have done in my place. I wanted that paper, and your brother begged for just such an enterprise."

She held out her hands. "If you please!" she said. "Good-by!"

Deane turned away. The girl was a little fool, of course. Yet as he turned and watched the smoke of the train disappear, and thought of her in her empty third-class carriage, alone, he was conscious of a sense of acute depression—none the less acute because it was vague. He turned back to the village, walking with heavy steps. It was as though a new trouble had come into his life.

## CHAPTER XVII.

Deane was shown into what was apparently the morning room of the Sarsby domicile by an open-mouthed and very country-looking domestic, who regarded him all the time with unaffected curiosity. Mr. Sarsby was sitting in an easy-chair, reading the *Times*. Directly he recognized his visitor he showed signs of nervousness.

"Ah, Mr. Deane!" he said, rising. "How do you do, Mr. Deane?"

Deane shook hands. His host did not ask him to sit down, nor did he himself resume his seat.

"I looked in," Deane explained, "to know what your niece had decided to do."

"She has decided to go to London at once," Mr. Sarsby answered, "at once. It is very inconvenient for all of us. I am almost sorry that you ever happened to point out the paragraph, especially as there seems to be no property of any sort to be found."

The door was suddenly opened and Ruby Sinclair entered. There was a frown which was almost a scowl upon her dark, handsome face. Little Mr. Sarsby seemed suddenly to have become a person of no importance.

"Mr. Deane will excuse me," he said hurriedly, yet with a marked attempt at stiffness. "I have to return the *Times*."

He left the room. Deane looked after him with some surprise.

"What is the matter with your uncle?" he asked the girl.

"He has just heard," she answered, "that a young lady from somewhere or other spent the night out at the tower last night."

Deane looked at her in amazement. "And what business is it of his?" he asked.

"I don't know," brusquely. "As a rule, gentlemen, when they're living alone, don't have young lady visitors—not to stay the night, at any rate."

Deane laughed. "The young lady in question," he said, "came to see me on a very important matter. If you heard anything of the storm last night, you would understand that it was scarcely possible for any one to have found her way from the tower to the mainland after the flood tide was in."

The girl nodded shortly. "It's not my business," she said. "I am glad you came. I wanted to ask you something. Who is this man Rowan who killed my uncle?"

Deane shook his head slowly. "No one knows very much about him," he said. "They were out in South Africa together. It was there, perhaps, that their quarrel, if they had one, started."

"It says in the *Times* this morning that he has been reprieved. Why?" she asked fiercely. "Why don't they hang him?"

"Because they came to the conclusion," he answered, "that there had been a fight, and that it was not a deliberate murder."

"They ought to have hanged him," she declared. "It was brutal—hideous!"

"You are going to London, are you not?" he asked quietly.

Her eyes flashed. "Yes," she answered. "I am going. I am afraid it will be too late. All the papers declare that my uncle's possessions were of little value. He has been robbed. I am sure he has been robbed. His letter told me that he would have plenty of money. He would not write and tell me that if he had nothing."

"You will be able to find out," Deane answered, a little coldly.

"I shall find out," the girl declared. "I am going to a good lawyer. He wrote as though he had something in his possession which was worth money. It was for that, I am sure, that this man Rowan tried to kill him. I shall find out all about it when I get there."

"The man Rowan was arrested on the premises," Deane reminded her. "There was no time for him to have taken anything away, and the room was locked up by the police."

"I don't care," she answered. "Oh! Can't you understand what this means to me?" she cried, jumping up from the chair in which she had seated herself a moment or so before. "I am starved for life here, starved for the want of it!" she cried. "I was never meant to live in a place like this—a life like this! It isn't fair. Other girls have clothes and jewels, and men to admire them, and go to theatres, and see the world. Why shouldn't I? I will! I am going to London to find out what that man killed my uncle for, and I mean never to come back here again."

The girl was evidently in earnest. Her bosom was heaving, her dark eyes were full of fire. Deane noticed the firm lines of her mouth, the crisp determination of her speech, and he realized a new danger. This girl was not one to be bribed or put off. Every word she had said she had meant. There was a distinct change in her whole appearance since the last time he had seen her. She was at once handsomer and less attractive. The wistfulness of her few sad speeches to him had passed away. The vague discontent seemed suddenly to have become focused in a passionate anger against this untoward stroke of fate.



"Well," said Deane at length, rising as though about to leave, "I hope you may discover, after all, that your uncle was a man of property."

"Why won't you help me?" she asked suddenly. "You could if you would."

"Could I?" he answered. "I wonder."

"Of course you could," she declared, coming a little nearer to him. "I suppose I seem a very ordinary, discontented sort of creature to you, but you haven't lived as many years as I have pushing against the walls of a prison. I think I am one of those persons who would improve a good deal with a little prosperity," she added, with a sudden smile which transformed her face, a smile which was almost brilliant. "Why won't you help me?"

"Do you mean that you would like me to go to London for you, and search through your uncle's effects?" Deane asked quietly. "If you gave me a letter, I suppose I could do that."

"Come with me, then," she begged. "I mean to do everything for myself, but there are many little things I am ignorant about. If you would come with me, I promise you," she added, looking into his eyes, "that you would not find me ungrateful."

"When are you going?" he asked.

"Monday morning," she answered.

Deane walked to the window, and looked out for a moment at the tangled wilderness of cottage flowers, which seemed to have been encouraged to grow there in wild profusion—a brilliant spot of color, as he remembered very well, from the sea lily. In a day or so at most, this girl might, if she realized her position, or if she were properly advised, be in a position to bring ruin upon him. An alliance with her was obviously the very best thing that could happen for him. Yet he felt a certain distrust, a certain unexplained reluctance to accept her overtures. If she discovered her power she would drive a hard bargain—he knew that well enough. If she did not discover it—

He turned away and faced her suddenly. "Yes," he said, "I'll help you

if I can. We'll go to London together on Monday morning."

A curious look came into her face. She drew him out of the room. "Come," she said, "I won't ask you to stay to tea, because my aunt thinks that you are a most improper person. I'll walk with you back across the marshes. I want you to tell me what you really think, and I want to show you the one letter I received from my uncle."

She read the letter to him as they walked side by side on the top of the dike path, which was high enough now from the receding waste of waters. The air was unusually salt. Great masses of seaweed had been brought in and left by the ebbing tide. The wind had freshened since the morning. She walked on in supreme disregard of her disordered hair and skirts.

"You see," she said, "he writes distinctly as one who has, or expects to have, money. Listen!"

She read:

"I did no particular good out there, but I have brought something home with me which will mean a fortune of some sort or another. I expect you have had quite enough of your country life, and you won't object to coming and sharing it with me. I am rather a rough sort, and I have a few vices that your respected Uncle Sarsby knows all about, but I fancy you will get a better time with me than with that solemn old prig. I'd like to do what I can for you, though we haven't seen much of one another, but your mother was the best sister a man ever had, and for her sake I look upon you as the only relative I've got worth counting."

She looked up at him eagerly. "Now tell me," she asked, "would he have written that if he hadn't something—jewels, or estate, or something of that sort, which he knew was going to bring him in money?"

"It doesn't sound so," Deane admitted.

She thrust the letter back into her pocket. "You will help me," she said, her face glowing, her eyes full of anticipation. "We will go through his papers carefully. We will find out, somehow or other, what he meant. Oh! It is good to think that I have only a few more days to eat and to sleep in this ghastly wilderness."

"You may be disappointed," he reminded her.

"Never!" she answered. "My uncle was no fool. What he had I shall discover."

"You may be disappointed," he continued, "in the things which wealth itself brings you. You may find life not so very much more wonderful a thing in the city than here in the wilderness."

"Don't you believe it!" she exclaimed, with a scornful laugh. "I am not that sort. I am not an artist who can sit about here for days and potter about with a paint box, and look at a sunset or a streak of wild lavender, or the shimmering of the yellow sands, as though it were something so marvelous that life itself stood still while they realized it. I like beautiful places and beautiful things, but I hate the impersonality of it all. I want to feel the touch of lace and furs and fine linen, to eat soft food, to listen to music, to ride when I want to, to sleep when I want to, to have friends who admire me, men friends worth speaking to, different from these yokels round here. I suppose I have got it in my blood," she added, with a little laugh. "The milk-and-water ways of life don't attract me. I want the big things."

"Do you know what the big things are?" he asked.

"When I have found my way where I mean to find it, I shall know," she answered. "Here, one might live till one's hair was gray and one's looks had passed, live—if you call it living—and never once see over the wall. When I have come so that I can see over the wall, then I will tell you, if you are still curious, what the big things of life are for me!"

#### CHAPTER XVIII.

It was three o'clock in the morning when Deane softly opened the door of his bedroom in the Hotel Universal, and looked up and down the side corridor. There was no one in sight, no sound of any one passing in the main corridor, a few yards away. For sev-

eral moments he stood and listened intently. Then he moved a few yards to the left, and stopped opposite another door. He scrutinized the number—27. It was the number he sought. He felt in his pocket for the keys which he had collected from various sources. One by one he tried them in the lock. In vain! Not one fitted. He tried the handle of the door softly. There was no doubt about it. The door was securely fastened.

He recognized at once the failure of his first attempt, and returned to his room. His bed was as yet undisturbed. He had not even changed the tweed traveling suit in which he had journeyed up from Rakney. It was a fool's errand, after all, he thought, on which he had come. Yet somehow or other, after his conversation with Ruby Sinclair, after he had realized how thorough her search would indeed be, how convinced she was that somewhere among the effects of the dead man lay the secret of wealth, he had realized more completely than ever before the danger in which he stood. Granted, even, that no suspicion of complicity with Rowan attached to him, his financial ruin would be none the less complete if that paper should ever come into the hands of people who understood its worth.

Never had the situation seemed so clear, so dangerous, as that night after he had walked home with the girl and turned his face again toward the sea. Something in the very desolation of the marshes seemed to help thought, perhaps by the absence of any distracting object. There was a sense of breadth about the place. As he walked, with only the murmur of the sea in his ears, he saw things clearly. He saw himself in the prime of life, suddenly flung from the place to which he had climbed, flung down to join all those poor millions of strugglers whose first foot has yet to be planted upon the first rung of the great ladder. He was too old to begin at the beginning. There was no place for him down among those on whom failure had already placed her mark. He could not have borne it. To

be stripped of his riches, his name, the position of which he was without a doubt proud, to suffer the breaking of his engagement, the downfall of all his ambitions—the very thought of it was intolerable.

And in the deep silence of that night, as he listened to the gurgling of the sea below, and the faint movements of the wind across the level land, he realized, with a sudden pain at his heart, the danger in which he stood. In three days the girl would be there. Scotland Yard would send one of its myrmidons with her. She would have free access to all the dead man's belongings. She would take with her a lawyer. Every scrap of paper the man had possessed, every trifling object, would have its value. The Little Anna Gold Mine was world-famous. There would be no chance of their overlooking a single document bearing such a name.

Before he had reached his strange dwelling place he had come to a resolution. Early next morning, stopping only to leave a note telling the girl where to find him when she arrived in London, he was off by the early train. By means of a little diplomacy he had succeeded in gaining a room within a few doors of the one in which Sinclair had been killed. Only a few feet of wall separated him from the room in which, somewhere or other, was to be found the paper he coveted. Well, his first attempt had been a failure. He knew quite well that the place was paraded by night watchmen, and that any attempt to gain an entrance into the room by orthodox means would result in prompt discovery. There was nothing to be done until the morrow. He threw himself upon the bed and tried to sleep.

Waking with the first gleam of daylight, he took off his clothes, bathed, and made a leisurely toilet. Then he rang for the *valet de chambre*. The man was a pleasant-faced, loquacious sort of fellow. Deane talked to him for a while, and then made his effort.

"Wasn't it upon this floor," he asked, "that a murder took place lately?"

The valet looked around him for a moment before answering. "Yes, sir,"

he replied. "In the very next room. We are not allowed to talk about it more than we can help."

Deane nodded. All the time he was watching the man, wondering how far he dared go. "Look here," he said, "you seem to be an honest fellow. I suppose you'd have no objection to bettering yourself in life?"

"No objection in the slightest, sir," the man answered.

"I am on the staff of a newspaper," Deane said slowly, "and my people are particularly anxious that I should inspect the interior of the room in which that murder was committed. Your people downstairs have absolutely refused to allow me to do anything of the sort. I have taken this room in the hope of being able to get in there. Do you think there is any chance for me?"

"I should say not, sir," the man answered. "The door is locked, and Mr. Hartshorn himself, the manager, has taken the key."

"There isn't such a thing as a duplicate, I suppose?" Deane asked.

"Not that I know of, sir," the man answered.

"You couldn't suggest any means by which I could enter that room, even if it were an affair of say fifty pounds to you?" Deane asked calmly.

The man started. Fifty pounds was a great deal of money. On the other hand, the fifty pounds would take some earning. "I am afraid I can't, sir," he said. "There is no duplicate key that I know of, and in any case I dare not run the risk."

"Fifty pounds is not enough, perhaps," Deane said. "Money is no particular object to me. If you said that you thought you could provide me with the key for a hundred pounds, I would willingly pay it."

"I am afraid not, sir," the man answered, turning as though to leave the room.

"Two hundred pounds!" Deane said.

"It isn't a matter of money, sir," the man declared. "I daren't do it. I should be certain to be found out, and I should be sent away without a character."

"I will take you into my service," Deane said.

The man shook his head. "Thank you, sir," he said. "My character is worth a good deal to me. I think I'll keep out of this, if you don't mind."

Deane called him back impatiently. "Let us understand one another," he said, drawing something from his pocket. "Are you going down to the manager to tell him what I have told you?"

The man hesitated. Deane held out a five-pound note. "There is no reason for you to do so, you know," Deane said, "just as there is no reason why you should not accept this tip."

The valet hesitated, and finally accepted the five-pound note which Deane was holding out.

"I am sure I don't know why I should take it, sir," he said, "but there is no reason, after all, why I should say anything of what you have been talking about, downstairs."

Deane sat in his chair, waiting. There was a knock at the door and a chambermaid entered, to retire at once in confusion. Deane looked at her curiously. Something in her figure and her start had seemed familiar to him. He got up and rang the bell. In a moment or two a waiter appeared. He was obviously a German, dark and sallow. He spoke imperfect English, and there was a gleam of cupidity in his eyes which to Deane seemed hopeful.

"Bring me some tea at once," he ordered, "nothing to eat."

The man departed, and reappeared in a few minutes.

"Anything else, sir?" he asked, after he had set down the tray.

Deane did not answer him directly. "By the way," he said finally, "wasn't there a murder committed in one of these rooms?"

"It was next door, sir," the man answered.

"The room is locked up?" Deane asked.

"Yes, sir."

"That is a pity," Deane remarked. "Do you know who has the key? I should very much like just to have a look around."

The waiter shook his head. "The key is downstairs in Mr. Hartshorn's office, sir, and we have no duplicate here. The police who came, they desired that no one should enter the room until they had removed the effects to Scotland Yard."

"So I was told downstairs," Deane remarked. "Do you suppose," he continued, "that it would be possible to get hold of a duplicate key? I should like very much to see the interior of that room—if possible to take a photograph of it for my newspaper. I am willing to pay."

The waiter shook his head reluctantly. "I do not think there is a duplicate key," he said, with his eyes fixed upon Deane's right hand.

"Perhaps you could make inquiries," Deane suggested smoothly. "I want to get a photograph of the inside of the room for my people, if possible. It would be worth quite a great deal of money."

The man was impressed. "I will go away and see," he said slowly.

"Keep this to yourself," Deane ordered. "I don't want it all over the hotel."

The man made a sign of assent and withdrew. Deane rang for the chambermaid. Once, twice, three times he rang, without response. Then a middle-aged person came shuffling in, very much out of breath. Deane gave her some trivial order.

"By the way," he asked, "are you the chambermaid who waits on this room?"

"No," she answered, with some hesitation. "The regular chambermaid is down at her breakfast."

Deane nodded. "Will you tell her," he asked, "that I should like to see her as soon as she is up? I want to see about some laundry," he added.

The woman disappeared. Deane was left alone once more. He unpacked some books, and made himself comfortable in an easy-chair. He was not able even to descend to the smoking room. Mr. Stirling Deane, it was well known, had left town for Scotland. Mr. B. Stocks, who had arrived at the hotel the night before and taken this room, was a per-

son who had particular reasons for not desiring to be seen even in the precincts of the hotel. Deane settled himself down to read—a somewhat difficult task. By the time he had smoked several cigarettes, there was a soft tap at the door and the waiter reappeared.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he said.

"Go ahead," Deane answered.

"I have found a key in the service room which I think would open number twenty-seven."

Deane nodded. "Very well," he said, "let me have the use of it to-night, and I will give you twenty pounds."

The man moistened his lips with his tongue. Twenty pounds was a wonderful sum! But—

"There is a good deal of risk about it, sir," the man said slowly, "and I have to divide with the night porter, who told me where to find this key."

"Very well," Deane answered, "I will give you twenty pounds each—no more."

The man placed the key silently in his hands, and Deane counted out eight five-pound notes.

"If I were you, sir," he said, "if you want to be alone in the room and be sure of no one seeing you, I should use it between four and five to-morrow morning. Every one is off duty then except the night porter."

Deane nodded. "By the way," he said, "do you know anything about the chambermaid on this floor—the young, slim one?"

The waiter shook his head. "She has only just come."

"Do you know her name?" asked Deane.

The man smiled. "It is always the same," he answered—"always Mary."

"She would not be allowed in twenty-seven?" Deane asked. "She would not be likely to be there to clean it out, or anything of that sort?"

The man shook his head again. "No one is allowed to enter it," he said. "No one has been in but the detectives and lawyers."

Deane dismissed the man and settled down once more to his reading. He found it difficult, however, to concen-

trate his thoughts. The key was on the chair by his side. It was all he could do to restrain himself from stealing down the corridor and commencing his search.

## CHAPTER XIX.

Deane remembered afterward, with a painful exactness, every step which he took in his stocking feet down the dimly lit corridor. Only one of the electric lights had been left burning, and that one was incased in a shade of red glass, and was set in the wall facing him. A few seconds ago he had heard Big Ben strike four o'clock. For the last two hours he had sat in his room and waited. Time seemed to have stood still. In that two hours he had seen himself stripped of all his possessions, dishonored, friendless. He had seen himself married to Lady Olive, richer and more prosperous than ever, a successful politician, a man on whom the eyes of the world were turned always with respect and approval. Hope and fear had swung in his mind like the movement of a pendulum. All that he needed was that paper! If once he could see it burning into white ashes, or torn into a hundred pieces, he knew that there was nothing in the world strong enough to bar his progress.

Four o'clock at last! At the sound of the hour he had sprung to his feet. Before the echoes of the last stroke had died away he was absolutely committed to his enterprise. For a moment he stood outside the door of his room, which he had left ajar. He looked toward the main corridor and listened intently; there was no sound to be heard. The night watchman—if, indeed, he were making his rounds—was nowhere in that vicinity. In all the great hotel, not a soul seemed to be stirring.

Deane drew one long breath, and without a second's hesitation stole forward until he stood in front of number twenty-seven. Once more he looked around him. The lights from all the transoms in sight had been extinguished. There was only that dimly burning electric light at the end of the corridor to dissipate the gloom. He

fitted the key into the lock and turned it. The door swung open. Deane closed it behind him, turned on the electric light, and gazed around him with fast-beating heart. He was there at last! Within this room, if anywhere, was his salvation!

It was, after all, a very ordinary hotel apartment. There was a small single bed, a wardrobe, a toilet table and chest of drawers, a hard, uninviting-looking sofa, and an easy-chair with a stiff back, and armless. Upon the bed were laid out a number of articles of wearing apparel, and upon the floor were two empty portmanteaus. Upon the dressing table were a number of papers, arranged with some appearance of method. The toilet things were still in their place. Everything was arranged in a stiff and precise condition. It was evident that official hands had been at work.

Deane's rapid glance around lasted barely a few seconds. Then he moved toward the dressing table and commenced a careful search among the papers there. One by one he glanced them through—a bill for clothes, a restaurant account, half a dozen counterfoils of theatre and music-hall tickets, an account for wines and cigars consumed on the steamer *Arizona*, homeward bound from Cape Town. There was the address of a manicurist, a programme of the Empire. Very soon Deane had come to the end of them. From the first to the last, there was not a single document there of any interest or importance.

He turned away toward the clothes which were laid out upon the bed. One by one he lifted them up and laid them down again, until he came to the gray suit which the man Sinclair had been wearing on the day when he had made his eventful visit to the city. Deane held up the coat, and a little exclamation almost escaped from his lips as he saw where in a certain place the lining showed signs of stitching, as though something had been sewn inside the pocket. He thrust his hand there. There was an opening, but it was empty! He tried the other side, but in

vain. Then he began slowly to realize that this search of his was doomed to end in failure. There was nowhere else to look. He glanced at his watch. Although it seemed to him that he had been in the little room for hours, he had indeed been there for barely five minutes.

He moved toward the door, opened it softly, and listened outside in the corridor. There was no sound of any one stirring, no sign of life or movement anywhere. He returned to the room and renewed his search. One by one he lifted up the different articles of clothing and felt in the pockets. His search was rewarded with the discovery of a single halfpenny in an odd waistcoat pocket. He left the clothes alone then and went through the papers once more, with a similar lack of success. Softly he opened all the drawers, ransacked the wardrobe, searched every inch of the room. When at last he desisted, it was because there was nowhere else to look, nothing else to attempt. He stood up in the middle of the room and drew a little breath. He had found nothing, nothing had transpired to compensate in any way for the risk which he had run. Yet there was one consolation. It was scarcely possible that Ruby Sinclair could be more successful than he. The paper which might make her fortune and ruin him was not here.

Deane turned at last toward the door. There was no need for him to prolong the risk he ran. He would return to his room, and leave the hotel later in the morning.

He took a few cautious steps toward the door. Suddenly he stopped short and held his breath. Very slowly he turned his head, and listened intently. Some one was stirring in the next room. There was a connecting door, hidden by a curtain, and even as he stood there he heard the handle shake as though it were being turned. He leaned forward and turned out the electric light. Standing there in the darkness he distinctly heard a key inserted in the lock of the hidden door. He heard it softly opened and the curtain pushed



back. There was some one else in the room, some one else whom he could not see, some one else who also took an interest in the effects of the murdered man!

There was an interval of several seconds—it seemed minutes—it might well have been hours. Then the stealthy footsteps came toward him. A little stiff rustle of draperies proclaimed the sex of the intruder. Without a second's warning the electric light flashed out all over the room. The girl would have screamed, but Deane, who was prepared, leaned forward, and his hand suddenly closed over her mouth. She looked at him with dilated eyes.

"You!" she exclaimed. "You!"

"Good God!" he answered. "Winifred Rowan!"

Their mutual surprise was something paralyzing. They drew apart and looked at one another as they might have done at ghosts.

"What do you want here?" he asked hoarsely.

Was it his fancy, he wondered, or did her lips curl for a moment in something like mockery?

"I came to repay a debt," she whispered. "I came to find the paper which you are afraid may fall into some one else's hands. I came to search for it, but it is not here."

"And I," Deane answered.

"You have found it, perhaps?" she exclaimed.

He shook his head. "It has gone!"

"Perhaps he never had it," she whispered.

Deane shook his head. He was being led away by the excitement, the tenseness of the moment—the unexpectedness of the whole situation. "He showed it to me," he answered, "only just before that night."

"Ah!"

The monosyllable seemed to leave her lips dry. She moistened them with her tongue, and moved a little toward him. There was something in her face which he could not recognize. And then, before further speech was possible, they heard something which, coming so unexpectedly against such a background of

silence, terrified them both. An electric bell somewhere close at hand was ringing out its sharp summons into the night.

"What is that?" Deane asked quickly.

"Some one is ringing from one of the numbers opposite," she answered. "Get back to your room quickly. They have heard us talking. Some one will be in here to search."

"But you?" he objected.

"I am safe," she answered. "I am on duty on this floor. I have something to do in the next room. Quick!"

He slipped from the door. The little side corridor was as yet empty. For a second or two he listened intently. There were no footsteps as yet audible in the main corridor. In half a dozen swift strides he reached the door of his own room, turned the handle, and passed inside. Almost immediately there were footsteps in the corridor outside. The bell of the room opposite was answered. Again silence! The seconds grew into minutes, and the minutes passed away. Then his door was suddenly opened from the outside, softly and silently. Winifred Rowan stood there on the threshold of his room, with the handle of the door still in her hand, and to his fancy there was something ominous in the way she looked at him.

"You need search no more," she said. "I have found the paper."

He held out his hand. "The reward is yours!" he declared.

She drew away from him. "I shall claim it very soon," she said. "Ring your bell at seven o'clock, when I shall be on duty, and I will bring it to you. Hush!"

She glided away and closed the door. Deane drew a long breath. So it was over, then—over, and he had won!

## CHAPTER XX.

Punctually at seven o'clock next morning Deane rang his bell. Once more the fat old lady entered, with her amiable smile and slow movements.

"Some tea, sir?" she asked.

Deane looked at her for a moment

without speaking. "When does the other chambermaid come on duty?" he asked.

"She ought to be on now," was the answer, "but she hasn't come. I've just sent the 'boots' up to her room."

Deane ordered some hot water and lay still for half an hour. Then he rang the bell again. The same woman came.

"Would you like your tea, sir?" she asked.

"If you please," he answered.

She was already halfway out of the door before he stopped her.

"You are still on duty, then?" he said.

"The other chambermaid can't be found, sir," she answered. "Her bed hasn't been slept in, and she doesn't seem to be anywhere about the place."

Deane nodded. It was, after all, perhaps the most sensible thing she could do to get clear away.

"Send me my tea at eight o'clock," he ordered, "and let me have a bath at once."

"The valet shall come and tell you when it is ready, sir," she answered.

He passed a tip across to the woman, who accepted it. "Tell the waiter when he brings the tea to give me my bill," he said.

In an hour's time Deane had left the hotel. He had seen nothing more of Winifred Rowan, and on the whole he was disposed to applaud her precaution. He drove at once to his rooms, where Grant, his man, was already installed.

"I shall catch the midday train to Scotland, Grant," he announced. "Telephone up for seats and sleeping berths. Also telephone to the office, and tell them to ring up here at once if a young lady should make any inquiries for me. Perhaps they had better send her on here."

He went out and did some shopping. The sun was shining, and a soft west wind blowing. London, which seems to hold its populace longer than any other great city, was gay, almost joyous. He had to elbow his way through crowds as he passed along Piccadilly.

The streets and shops were thronged. The sky above was blue. The rare sunshine seemed to make cheerful even this most somber of cities.

Deane had the feeling of a man who has escaped from a great danger, who has been able to throw off a heavy weight. This miserable document of Sinclair's was as good as in his possession! After all, Basil Rowan was not suffering in vain. The girl should have every penny that he had promised her brother. Her way in life should be made easy. It was a very small price, indeed, to be free from such torture as he had suffered during the last few weeks. He bought presents a little recklessly—presents for Olive—something, too, for Winifred Rowan, a gold cigarette case for himself. He ordered a great basket of flowers to take with him to Scotland, and paid a visit to his gunmaker's. Then he returned to his chambers, fully expecting to have some news of Winifred Rowan.

"Any one rung up?" he asked his man.

"No one, sir, of any importance," was the answer.

"Did you ask the office about Miss Rowan?"

"No young lady at all has inquired for you there, sir," Grant answered.

Deane was a little surprised, but after all what did it matter? He traveled up to Scotland with a lighter heart than he had carried for months. Lady Olive, who met him early in the morning at the small wayside station which was nearest to her father's seat, was amazed at his vivacity.

"I expected to find you a pale, worn-out thing," she remarked, as their motor car climbed the white, stone-bordered road which crossed the heather-covered mountain. "You don't look as though you needed a change at all."

"I've found so swift a tonic, you see," he answered, pressing her hand.

She laughed gayly. This was more the man as he had been before the days of their engagement. "I think it is the smell of the powder," she said. "You men are all like schoolboys for your holidays. Father says that the birds

are much too wild, and that it will be all even you can do to hit them."

Deane smiled. "There is nothing in the world," he answered, "which I want to do so much as to lie up there in the heather and close my eyes, and feel the sun and the wind."

"In other words," she said, "you are lazy!"

"Is that laziness?" he asked. "I don't think so."

"Rest, then," she said.

"Ah! That is a very different thing!" he replied. "We all need rest."

"Especially you," she said, "who carry about with you always the memory of some things from which you can never escape."

He looked at her quickly, but it was obvious that her speech was wholly unpremeditated.

"I often wonder," she said calmly, "when I see you in the evenings, how you manage to shake off all your anxieties so easily, for I suppose," she continued, "that success, like everything else, carries always its anxieties."

"Sometimes more than failure," he answered.

"Well," she continued, "it doesn't seem possible to associate the word 'failure' with you. Some day you must tell me the whole story of your life. I can scarcely believe that there has ever been a time when you haven't succeeded in anything you undertook."

He laughed grimly. "You should have been with me in Africa," he said, "after the fighting was over. We expected to go about picking up gold almost on the streets."

"You were too sanguine," she laughed.

"It was hard enough work to live," he answered. "I tried many things—failures, all of them."

"Until the Little Anna Gold Mine," she remarked.

"Until the Little Anna Gold Mine," he assented, "and that, at first, seemed hopeless enough. The mine had been deserted twice. The natives there had a name for it which means the Grave of Dead Hopes!"

They turned into the avenue, and the

house was at once visible, standing on the edge of a lake, large and a little bare. The lawns and gardens were brilliant with color, and the hills on the other side of the water were purple with heather.

"Well, here is all the rest you want," she said. "We haven't a neighbor within six miles, and a most harmless lot of guests."

He drew a long sigh of content. The tragedy, indeed, of the last few weeks seemed to lie far behind in some other world.

## CHAPTER XXI.

The solicitor hung up his silk hat, motioned his two visitors to seats, and took his accustomed place in front of his writing table. "I am afraid," he said, turning toward Mr. Sarsby, but in reality addressing his niece, "that your visit to town has been, in some respects, a disappointment to you, especially," he continued, "bearing in mind the letter which you, my dear young lady, have just shown me. Still, there is no getting away from facts. We have carefully examined every paper and every portion of the personal belongings of the deceased, and I am afraid we must come to the decision that there is nothing in those effects worth taking away."

"It certainly seems not," Mr. Sarsby assented. "I must say that from the first I have discouraged my niece in her expectations. I never knew Sinclair, but every one spoke of him as being a shiftless and impossible sort of person."

The lawyer nodded. "From the state of his effects," he remarked, "that seems very possible, and yet one cannot help wondering what it was that he had in his mind when he wrote to your niece—what it was, too, that induced him to take rooms in a hotel like the Universal."

Ruby Sinclair rose slowly to her feet. She came to the table before which the solicitor was seated, and she looked down at him with blazing eyes.

"Can't you see, you two," she exclaimed, "can't you understand that the

man has been robbed of something? He would never have written me in that strain if he had not believed that he possessed something which was at any rate worth money, and a great deal of money. He would never, with only twenty pounds in his pocket, have gone to a hotel like the Universal, drunk champagne there, and lived as though his means were unlimited. These things are ridiculous!"

"But, my dear young lady," the lawyer commenced.

"Can't you see the truth?" she exclaimed. "My uncle was murdered. Why? What was the motive? Robbery! Do you think that it was for the sake of the twenty pounds or so that he had on him, and which were found untouched? The man Rowan was in South Africa with my uncle—he knew his business. It was no ordinary quarrel, this. I tell you that Rowan robbed my uncle of something—I don't know what—but something which was the backbone of this letter!" she exclaimed, dashing it upon the table. "Something which justified him in staying at the Universal, which must be found!"

The lawyer nodded. "That point of view," he admitted, "has occurred to me, I must confess. And yet, you must remember that the man Rowan was arrested upon the premises. He had nothing with him which could by any chance have belonged to the dead man."

The girl stamped her foot impatiently. "Have you read the evidence at the trial?" she asked. "It is very clear that this man Rowan was no fool. Whatever he wanted from my uncle, he secured and disposed of before he was arrested. The last thing he would do would be to carry about with him on his person anything which he had taken from my uncle."

"What you suggest may be possible, of course," the lawyer remarked, "but, unfortunately, we have not the slightest indication of it. The man Rowan was not seen to speak to any one in the hotel, and it is known that he did not leave it after the quarrel until his arrest."

"And you are content to leave it like that?" the girl asked.

The lawyer shrugged his shoulders. "It is not that we are content," he said, a little stiffly, "but there certainly seems to be no cause for any further action."

The girl turned to Mr. Sarsby. "We had better go," she said abruptly. "There is nothing to be gained by staying here."

The solicitor accompanied them to the door. "Miss Sinclair," he said, "I can sympathize with your disappointment, but I do beg of you not to go looking for a mare's nest. It is disappointing, of course, to find that your uncle was practically a pauper, especially after that letter of his, but, on the other hand, men in his position, I am afraid, are proverbially given to exaggeration."

"Thank you," the girl said sharply. "I think that we will not talk about this any more."

Mr. Sarsby and his niece walked slowly up a little side street which led into the Strand. The former, who was sharing to some extent his niece's disappointment, found compensation in the thought of a speedy return to Rakeby.

"I am afraid, Ruby," he said, "that you are very much disappointed, and it seems to me that we have wasted our railway fares to London. It can't be helped. We may as well make the best of it and get back at once. I can see no reason why we should not catch the three o'clock train. I shall be able to play my match, then, with Colonel Forsitt to-morrow morning."

"You can go and play your match if you want to," the girl answered. "I am going to stay in London."

"To stay in London?" Mr. Sarsby repeated.

"I mean it," the girl answered. "I don't mean to be robbed. I mean to stay here and find out why this man Rowan quarreled with my uncle, and what my uncle meant when he wrote to me about a fortune. You go back, if you like," she continued, "Give me five pounds to stay here with, and I'll come back when I've found out the truth."

Mr. Sarsby was aghast. He looked at his niece with wide-open eyes. What

had come to her that she should speak of such a sum as five pounds almost carelessly?

"I shall do nothing of the sort," he answered decidedly, "nor shall I allow you to stay up here alone—a most improper proceeding, I should call it—quite unheard of. We will go back to the hotel, pay our bill, have a little lunch at an A B C shop, and catch the three o'clock train home."

"If you won't let me have the five pounds," she answered, "all right. Good-by!"

She turned abruptly away, and before his astonished eyes plunged into the stream of traffic, making for the other side of the street. He followed her as soon as he saw a safe opening, and found her on the point of entering a small restaurant.

"My dear Ruby," he exclaimed sharply, "you are mad! How dared you leave me like that?"

She shrugged her shoulders. "I have been mad," she answered, "to live that awful life down at Rakney for these last few years. I've had enough of it, uncle. I am here, and I am going to stay here. If I can't succeed in what I am going to undertake, I shall try and find some work."

Mr. Sarsby gasped. It was a wholly unexpected revolt. "You mean to say that you don't want to come back to Rakney?"

"Never, if I can help it!" the girl answered. "I hate the place. I hate the life. I am tired, sick to death of it all," she cried passionately, "and I would as soon come up here and live for a week or two, and then throw myself into the Thames, as go on with it any longer. If you won't let me have the five pounds," she continued, "I have enough jewelry with me to fetch about that. The money would only mean a week or two longer."

"But where would you live?" he exclaimed. "What would you do?"

"That is my affair," she answered simply. "First of all, though, I should go to Mr. Deane, and I should ask him to help me. Any man of common sense

would agree with me at once in believing that my uncle was robbed."

"But your aunt?" Mr. Sarsby exclaimed weakly.

"My aunt can get on very well without me," the girl declared.

Mr. Sarsby felt that a situation had arisen with which he was unable to cope. The only thing that occurred to him to do was to temporize. "You will have to come back to the hotel," he said, "to get your luggage. We will talk it over on the way there."

"Just as you please," the girl answered carelessly, "only so far as I am concerned, there is nothing to talk over."

Mr. Sarsby hailed a bus which deposited them presently within a few yards of the semi-private hotel in Montague Street at which they were staying. It was one of those establishments which, from being a small boarding house, had blossomed out into a hotel, with all the outward signs of its more prosperous rivals. There was an entrance hall, a reception office, and two long-limbed giants in light blue livery, who spoke every language except their own. The people who frequented it were either Americans, or people from the isolated country places, such as Mr. Sarsby and his niece.

"I am not going to talk anything over until I have had some lunch," the girl declared. "We need not go out. It is only eighteenpence each here. You can afford that, especially as you are probably going to be rid of me forever."

Mr. Sarsby frowned. "We will lunch here if you prefer it," he said. "I am not aware that I have hesitated at anything on the score of expense."

The girl laughed. There was a note in her mirth which was strange to Mr. Sarsby. He relinquished his well-worn silk hat to a boy in buttons, straightened his old-fashioned tie before a passing mirror, and led the girl into the dining room. The size of the apartment, the number of the waiters, the indefinable sense of being in a great city, which had oppressed him since the train had rolled into the terminus on his arrival, once more had its effect upon him. He felt

sure that his niece understood nothing of what she was talking about. He drank bottled beer with his lunch, and soon summoned up courage to reopen the matter.

"It was a very good idea of yours, my dear Ruby," he said, "to lunch here. I am sure that for the money it is a most excellent meal."

She gave vent to a little interjection which might have meant anything. If he had not been so sure that she was unused to such magnificence, he would have believed that it was intended to indicate a certain amount of contempt at her entertainment.

"And now," Mr. Sarsby continued, "let me speak to you seriously."

The suggestion that there had been anything of mirth from which Mr. Sarsby desired to lead the way appealed to the girl's sense of humor. Her lips parted, and the sullen discontent of her face was for a moment lightened.

"Very well," she said, "let us be serious. Go on. Tell me what you have to say."

"What I want to put before you is briefly this," he declared. "You do not understand the impossibility of a young girl barely twenty years old, with your"—he coughed a little—"personal attractions, being left alone in London. Of course, it is difficult for me to explain to you exactly what I mean."

"You needn't," the girl interrupted. "Do you think that I am a fool? I know all about those risks which people speak about with bated breath, and I should like you to know that I am quite able to take care of myself. I am not afraid, so I do not know why any one need be afraid for me."

Mr. Sarsby looked at her and wondered where among the wastes and wind-swept places of his lonely home had the girl acquired the knowledge which she alluded to so scornfully—had she learned, too, he reflected, to carry herself, as she had done since their arrival, with an ease and assurance which he had tried in vain to emulate. He realized at that moment that all further argument would be wasted. Nevertheless, he continued to ease his conscience.

"You may know a good deal," he said, "or think you do—girls nowadays read and talk of most surprising things—but London is not a safe place for a young girl, whatever you may say, especially a young girl without enough money to live on."

"I suppose," she said, laughing at him openly, "that Rakney is a safe place. Well, I have tried it for a good many years, and I have had enough. You needn't be afraid," she continued, "that I shall return to Rakney in the guise of a prodigal daughter. If I don't succeed in tracing Richard Sinclair's fortune, I shall find something else to do. If you will give me the five pounds I ask for, it will make things easier. If not, I shall get on without it."

He felt that he was being weak. Even his conscience told him that greater firmness was necessary. And yet he recognized something in the girl's demeanor which assured him absolutely that any protests were hopeless. There was a hidden strength there, shared by neither her aunt nor himself—something which kept her apart from them—which made him half believe, in spite of himself, that what she set herself to do she would accomplish.

"At least," he said, "we must know where you are going to live."

"There is no need for you to stay in London," she answered, "while I look about for a room. I know exactly the sort of place I am going to take. I am going out in the Tube to one of the suburbs, where a bedroom is not very expensive, and I shall take my meals out. It will cost me very little to live, and five pounds will go quite a long way. By the time it is spent, I think that I shall have discovered something. I will not write you for any more money, I promise."

Mr. Sarsby sighed. "I suppose you must have your own way," he said. "I don't know what your aunt will say."

She laughed. They had finished their luncheon and had risen from the table. "Enough about my aunt," she said. "She will have all the anxiety of her preserves upon her mind directly, and I think she will be glad not to be



bothered with me. You catch your three o'clock train, and play your golf match to-morrow."

"I suppose I may as well," he said weakly, "although I never can putt after a railway journey."

"Go and try, anyhow," she answered. "We will say good-by to one another here, if you don't mind. The porter will take care of my luggage until I have taken my room."

"I suppose if I were to stay up with you for a few days——" he began.

"Please, uncle, don't!" she said firmly. "It isn't any use. You have been kind to me in your way, but the life at Rakney is horrible to me. I have made up my mind to have no more of

it. You've done your best for me, you can't do more. Good-by! There is your bag, and you haven't too much time to catch the three o'clock train. Take the first turn to the left from here, and book to King's Cross by the Tube. Good-by!"

Mr. Sarsby picked up his bag and departed without any further protest. The girl stood upon the steps and watched him, and, as she watched, some of the darkness seemed to pass away from her face. He disappeared around the corner. She was alone—free, at any rate! She drew a long breath, and the dull streets and gray sky seemed suddenly to have become like the walls and canopy of a new paradise.

TO BE CONTINUED.



## IN SEASON

O H, the gorse it is prim and prickly,  
But it blooms the round year through,  
Be the sunshine pale and sickly  
Or the heavens all balmy blue.  
And thus was a proverb minted,  
"Twixt wisdom, wit, and reason:  
"When the gorse is out of blossom,  
Then kisses are out of season."

Lay it to heart, sweet lassie,  
Lay it to heart, brave lad,  
Heed it, ye sighing elders;  
Kiss till your hearts are glad.  
Love is a kingly comrade  
Through the world of workaday,  
A kiss is his signet royal—  
Seal with it while ye may.

MARTHA McCULLOCH-WILLIAMS.

# A MEDIATION



By H. F. PREVOST BATTERSBY

**T**HOUGH, without, the April twilight was turning the London grayness to a misty rose, Desmond had drawn the revolving chair from his desk to the fire, and was sitting looking thoughtfully at the red coals, when the door opened behind him, and Miss Hilda Rosney was announced.

For a man provokingly deliberate, he turned quickly, and his grave, gray eyes went blue like a flame that leaps up and out.

But even that flash of surprise, which had thrown a wavering reflection along his lips, was gone as he stepped forward with a simple greeting, and drew a big chair for his visitor beside the fire.

She was dressed in a somber red, with touches of silver, smothered under smoke-gray furs. The quiet perfection of her costume spoke of the world it came from, and its wearer was the last person Desmond had ever expected to welcome to his rooms.

It may have been a consciousness of his reflections, as much as the cold wind, which had heightened her color. She looked doubtfully at the seat which had been offered her, then turned a plain chair outward from the table and sat down upon it. She sat severely erect, as if on no terms with comfort; and Desmond, acknowledging her attitude with an inclination of the head, thought, as he swung the back of his own chair to the fire, that her face had never seemed quite so handsome as with this disdainful air.

"I suppose you are surprised to see me?" she began coldly.

"Did I show it?" he said.

"Do you show anything? No, you did not; but you were."

"I was not expecting you," he returned politely.

"You think my coming here to see you is most indiscreet?"

"I might not have advised it, perhaps," he said.

He had not taken his eyes from the splendid figure of the woman, planted there before him with such a show of resolute unfriendliness.

"You can't think worse of it than I do," she continued, "and yet I've come. From that you can judge how strong were my reasons."

"I can," he said.

He could; he knew Hilda Rosney well enough for that. Men lost their heads about her, but never with her assistance. The man that won her would have, unquestionably, to "go all the way."

"Perhaps you can guess, too, about what I've come?" she suggested.

He looked at her intently, as though he expected to find the answer on her face. But he shook his head.

"I never can guess even simple little things," he said.

"This is a simple thing," she answered, "or it should be, since it concerns your honor. I've come about my friend."

"Which?" he asked. "You have so many."

"The one who was more than a friend to you."

The flame-blue flash lit the man's eyes again, but for an even briefer instant than before.

"Yes," he said in acknowledgment, "Miss Daisy Lonsdale. You have come from her?"

"No," she returned decisively. "I have not come from her. I have come of myself, because she is my friend, and has been treated shamefully. I have come to make you marry her."

Desmond's face changed curiously. Not in line, or in color, but, one might almost say, in texture. The look upon it took the light at new angles; it had crystallized from solution.

"I'm afraid I imperfectly understand," he said. "You say you do not come from her?"

"Did you suppose it?" she exclaimed.

"No," he said, "I did not. I think I know Daisy Lonsdale better; but then——" He stopped. "May I ask, without seeming impertinent, why you have taken us in hand?"

"I've told you," she replied. "You have wronged the greatest friend I have, and she has no one else to stand up for her."

"How wronged?" he asked thoughtfully.

"Oh, don't palter!" she burst out. "How does a man wrong a girl he promises and then declines to marry?"

"I don't know," he said humbly.

"You don't know!" she cried. "Don't you know that you have cheapened her value in the eyes of all decent people? That you've spoilt her faith in love, and men, and marriage?"

He shook his head.

"You know, at least," she exclaimed impatiently, "that she has been here with you often and often, though you thought it unwise of me to come once?"

"But you aren't going to marry me," he suggested soothingly.

"Is *she*?" the other scorned, with a flush of color.

"So you say," he said.

No remark could have been less discreet. It closed her mission in the woman's face, and closed it with a bang.

"Yes, I did say so," she replied stoutly, "though you laugh at it."

"Not at all," he answered. "I was only wondering what you would do."

"You thought, possibly, that I might go down on my knees and beg you to be a man. Well, I won't. The idea doesn't seem to have much attraction for you; perhaps it isn't possible to you. I thought, certainly, you might be interested in your honor; men pretend to be; but they don't seem to *have* an honor where a woman is concerned. Anyway, I didn't come to beg. I came to make you keep your word to a woman who loves you; though, perhaps, as that was beyond my power, I should have put it differently."

"There would seem to be better ways," he agreed blandly.

"Yes! I meant to say you could choose between that and being shot."

And there, before he could realize her words, was a thing of blue steel in her fingers, with its deadly black eye upon his face.

"Keep still!" she commanded. "If you move in the least I shall fire, and you will be responsible for the result."

Her voice had taken suddenly the dangerous vibration which belongs to those whose depths are rarely sounded; and Desmond, warned by its intensity, smiled back, without moving, at her imperious eyes.

He could see the greasy bullet heads in their chambers and found himself guessing their caliber as his dazed senses adjusted themselves gradually to what had happened.

Nothing could have been farther from his thoughts than that this piece of quixotic impertinence should become, in a wink, preposterously tragic. Here was a woman of unimpeachable manners, for whom he felt the very warmest admiration, and who was certainly not indifferent to his regard, behaving, on an April afternoon in the heart of London, like some reckless outlaw of the bush.

He smiled at her menace, but he could gauge its danger. What he knew of Hilda Rosney was disquieting enough. Her figure seemed always to show with

a certain superb impassiveness among her flighty friends, yet the wildest of them would not have ventured on the half of her audacities.

He had had no experience of these himself, but stories were current; stories with no lack of witnesses to their truth.

How, once, she had challenged a young cavalryman—somewhat inclined to big talk of his doings, but the best rider in Kildare—to a straightaway race, in which the first who drew rein should be the loser.

It was the soldier who pulled up, and Hilda broke her horse's back and her own collar bone over the twenty-foot bank which had stopped him. He had to take her home on his mare, but was too disgusted by her savage recklessness ever to speak to her again.

There was the story, too, how once, when being scullied past Harleyford Weir by a man whose attitude she found too familiar, she had, after a single peremptory warning, got up and walked into the river, treading the skiff under water on her way.

Had Desmond known more, he might have been still further disquieted, for Hilda Rosney was one of those women who make an idol of pluck, and will stop at no folly in its worship. Not that she valued the quality in herself, or in any woman. "Women were made to cry," she would say scornfully; but, without it, no virtue counted in a man.

She had, of course, to take some measure of it for granted in most of her acquaintances; but any man who presumed to admire her found himself put inevitably to the test; and her tests had been more numerous and remarkable than Desmond was aware.

Not that she was in the least conscious of her strange methods; they evolved themselves from the mere intimate presence of a man, and her hot contempt of a coward.

But, in Desmond's case, the process was intensified by her liking for him. Since she disdained the attentions of a coward, it was intolerable to be attracted by one; and though she could not apply that epithet to Harry Desmond,

his utter indifference to courage touched her suspicions, and his disinclination for strenuous sports confirmed them.

Yet it was not the desire to make trial of his pluck which had brought her there that evening.

Precisely what had it would be hard to say.

Friendship, jealousy, contempt, desire, and admiration—each had held a share.

In her own rooms, an hour earlier, she had heard the story of Desmond's broken faith from a friend who had used to the full friendship's privilege of innuendo.

When the teller was gone, she had paced to and fro in a little boiling impatience of the man who could give his heart to such a vapor of frivolity as Daisy Lonsdale, and yet lay claim to it again. The impatience was justified by Desmond's carelessness of conventions and the girl's indifference to her fame, but it was a good deal above the temperature of pure altruism.

As she stopped for an instant, staring blankly at the wall, her glance fell on the revolver which hung upon it, and she snatched it from its holster with the quick relief which comes to impotence from the sense of war.

The weapon, a service one, hung in a case whose pigskin showed scarcely a sign of travel, and which still held at its nozzle a few grains of desert sand. It had been sent her, with his last breath, by another victim, after a fashion, to her insatiable demand for valor; and more than once since then, with remembrance in her grip of the dead man's fingers, she had crushed out silently against its handle her contempt for the puerilities of the world. But another thought seized her before she replaced it, which dammed back abruptly the flood of her petulance, and left gaping and empty the road where it had roared.

This breach of Desmond's faith had for her, just at present, the sharpest meaning, since she might be quoted as its cause. Such a hint had been handed on to her more than once of late, when

Desmond's homage and her complaisance had been too plain to be ignored.

Now her thought was to make away with all such whisperings—for him and for her. To force on him a humiliation he never could forgive, to force from him a pledge he would be too proud to break, and to end at once her interest in his courage and her doubts about it.

If he quailed before her threat she could have done with him happily; and every mouth would be stopped that might accuse her. If he did not? Well, she would not think of that. The other thing would happen; Daisy would gain a husband, and she go free.

So far, however, the other thing had not happened. Desmond, though perhaps with a shade less color in his face, sat perfectly quiet, but quite unflurried, with one hand still behind his head, his lips just dented with a smile, and his eyes taking, in one line, the weapon and her face.

The risk he ran had quickened his pulse, but not sufficiently to dissolve the bitter disgust which filled him at the insanity of the whole affair.

"Wouldn't it be as well to let down that hammer?" he said slowly. "One's apt to underrate the pressure of the finger which has been held for any time against a trigger."

"Thank you," she replied shortly, "my hand is perfectly steady."

"That's a self-cocker," he went on, "and would put a couple of shots through me before I could reach it if I tried to move. As it is, you may shoot me before there's any need."

"The more reason to make up your mind at once," she suggested.

"It is made up," he said.

"You won't marry her?"

"Not as far as I can see."

There was silence between them for some seconds; then she said: "It's seven minutes to six by that clock behind you; I'll give you till the hour strikes."

"Thanks," he murmured, "but I'm afraid you will be very tired."

"I shall be able to bear it," she replied.

"Well," he said reflectively, "I don't know. You see, the clock *doesn't* strike!"

She tightened her lips at his levity.

"I will let you know," she said.

"Thanks," he repeated. "In the meantime, mayn't we have that hammer down?"

She answered nothing for some seconds, then:

"You are afraid!" she said.

"Of your finger, very considerably," he replied.

"Of being shot," she corrected scornfully.

"By accident," he put in.

"It comes to the same thing," she said.

"It does, for me," he admitted ruefully, "but it might save you a hanging."

"You needn't concern yourself about me," she said.

"I'm not very sure that I did," he replied doubtfully, "but I wish, if you won't let down that hammer, that you would turn the muzzle on some less vital part. It's giving me an anticipatory spasm."

"I didn't know before that you were a coward," she exclaimed contemptuously.

"Oh, I could have told you, any time," he sighed.

But though he met her solemnity with banter, every moment made him more uneasy. His eyes, which had wandered in perverse admiration over the buoyant curves of her figure, were fixed now upon the bright cone of steel above the backsight. He wondered if he could dodge, when he saw it fall, in time to save himself. He hardly believed that Hilda would fire willfully; it was some nervous tightening of her finger on the trigger that he feared.

A couple of minutes went by in silence. The fire cracked, and a bridge of coals fell in.

"Isn't this rather medieval?" he said at length. "Sitting cowering here under a blunderbuss makes one feel a good deal out of date."

She took no notice of the remark, but moved her left elbow slightly on

the table, shifting her hold on the butt of the pistol at the same time; Desmond acknowledging the movement with a wrinkle of the brows.

"Suppose I promise?" he said presently.

"Well?"

"What good will come of it?"

"What always comes of faith to one's oath."

"Little enough when the oath's a foolish one."

"Then you should not swear."

"No, one should not swear. A man's too small for it; he hasn't the scope. But having sworn and seen one's folly, a man should be strong enough to break his oath."

"Strong enough!"

"Yes, strong enough. It's easier to keep a promise than to call yourself a fool. Especially as to one's passions, which are supposed to be as fixed a part of one as the stem is of a tree, whereas they are only birds that nest in the branches."

"A man's passions!" she cried deliberately.

"Yes, and a woman's. Only, her birds sing. But they go, as his go, when the boughs are bare; and it's better to be honest when one finds them gone."

"Whatever it may cost the other?"

"That it may cost the other no more than it has."

"And that is your conception of honor?"

"It is my perception of life."

She looked from his face to that of the clock. "You have two minutes more of it," she said deliberately.

Desmond yawned. Begun artificially, to mark his indifference, the gape extended to its nervous span.

Since he could not move to hide it with his hand, he leaned back slightly, and turned his mouth to the ceiling. The action brought the back of his hand against a tobacco jar on the mantelshelf. A minute passed; his eyes shifted slowly from the barrel of the revolver to Miss Rosney's face.

It was set stonily, and its rich color was dim. What had been beauty was

become a menace, and a menace that was afraid.

As he looked he yawned again, this time in pure pretense, and leaned back farther than before. The next instant a sudden dense surge of smoke, pierced by a spout of flame, seemed to leap out between them with a roar that rent the room, followed by a crash of splintered glass, as the mirror behind, Desmond's head fell in shivered fragments about the fireplace.

Leaning back, he had laid hold of the tobacco jar, and flung it, with a swiftness that outpaced her eye, at the pistol in Hilda's hand. Fortunately it struck the cylinder; for, had it hit the stock instead, he might have had the bullet through his body.

That passed, as it was, within a couple of feet of his head, smashing a big china bowl upon the mantelshelf and the mirror behind it.

Miss Rosney had given a sharp cry as the thing, bursting into flame and uproar in her hand, had been swept out of it she knew not how. She sat gripping the table edge with her left hand to stop the nervous trembling which shook all her body, as she stared into the fog of smoke that shut out everything in front of her, and beyond which, in a horrible intensity of silence, the last splinters of the mirror fell tinkling from its frame.

The shock, the uproar, the straining anxiety to know what lay before her in the smoke, had severed the control of her limbs, and she sat shivering and powerless as the gray fog swayed to and fro.

Yet the first glimpse through it which she had of Desmond, sitting with the same air of indolent indifference, as he waited with a smile for her figure to reappear, impelled in her a sudden movement to regain the revolver.

But the amusement on his smiling lips stopped her as she leaned forward. If he were too proud to secure his safety, she was too abashed again to threaten it.

She stayed as his glance had arrested her, bent toward him, her fine eyes smoldering with anger at her defeat.



His smile bade her go on with her melodrama, as it might have incited a child, who had belabored him, to repeat its futility.

But under that unruffled surface a pulse beat audibly in his ears. He had kept what he conceived to be the proper aspect in this mad affair, but he was extremely glad that the need of it was at an end; and the smile, which seemed to Hilda hateful in its cynic superiority, was a mark merely of his relief.

They sat facing each other thus for some seconds, the woman still gripping the table to steady herself, and Harry Desmond wondering what to say next, when he observed a stain spreading about her fingers on the tablecloth. He leaned forward quickly.

"You've cut your hand," he said.

She took no notice. Filled with contempt for this trembling self which had supplanted the woman who had laughed at nerves, she faced him like a tigress with its back shot through as she would spring.

The splendid color of her face was lit, by the blaze behind it of strange emotions, to the somber richness of an emblazoned window.

Desmond had never seen her so superb.

"Now," she said, holding her voice hard, "I suppose you will do as you please?"

The smile deepened along his lips.

"Now?" he queried.

"Since I've failed. I was a fool to come. A woman's always a fool to do anything that every one else hasn't done. But no doubt you found it very amusing."

"Amusing? Oh, no!" he said.

"Others will then," she continued bitterly. "It will make an excellent story."

"It will," he assented, "if you care to tell it."

"I?" she cried.

"Who else?" he asked, looking gravely into her face.

It darkened with a repentant flush.

"No," she said, "I didn't really think you would. But you must hate me a good deal just now."

"Not more than I can keep to myself," he answered, smiling. "Will you please lift up that hand?"

This time she obeyed and turned it, palm uppermost, toward him.

He drew in his breath with a sharp note of concern, went quickly over to the sideboard, filled a finger glass with water, and tore a napkin into strips. Then he came back to her, and, taking her wounded hand in his, ripped the glove off it with a penknife. The trigger and trigger guard had torn the glove and skin from her two first fingers, as, with the recoil and blow combined, it had been dashed from her grasp.

Desmond exposed the wounds with a gentleness and dexterity which surprised her. She leaned back in the chair and looked up at him with a smile. He dipped her hand in the bowl, washed and dried the injured fingers, and wrapped them in the linen strips.

"I didn't mean to be such a brute," he said penitently.

"As to try and save yourself?"

"Oh, you wouldn't have fired," he suggested vaguely.

"I should," she said.

He gave a laugh.

"I wasn't very sure," he admitted, eying her, "but why ever did you do it?"

"You know," she said.

"No, nor do you either. I believe," he smiled. "But wasn't it rather a risky experiment?"

"For you?"

"Oh, no! For you. Supposing I had promised?"

Her eyes flashed at him resentfully, and she tried to draw her hand away. But he restrained it by the thread with which he was sewing the bandage, and took hold of it again.

"Supposing I had promised?" he repeated.

"I would sooner not talk about it if you please," she said.

"But I must; because——" He hesitated. "Because, you see, it wouldn't have been any use."

"You've said that," she exclaimed impatiently.

"I haven't, indeed! You don't understand. I wasn't the one you should have shot."

"What do you mean?" she asked apprehensively.

"It was Miss Lonsdale who declined to marry *me*."

"Why didn't you tell me?" she demanded sharply.

"What! With that pistol at my head? Hardly!" he smiled.

"No," she allowed reflectively, "I suppose you couldn't."

She remained for some seconds in thought, with her eyes upon the hand that lay in his, under the needle that went to and fro.

"She absolutely threw you over?"

"Absolutely," he said.

"Why?"

"Some one else," he smiled.

"Were you very, very fond of her?"

He raised his eyes from the bandages and looked into hers.

"Fond enough still to wish her well."

Her eyes dropped.

"That isn't to be dreadfully in love, is it?"

"No, only reasonably so, I suppose."

She shook her head slowly.

"Too, too reasonable to be in love at all."

"I wouldn't have shot her," said Desmond mischievously.

"But you'd have lived with her?" she exclaimed.

"If she had still wanted me," he said.

"How horrible!" she said.

The smile widened significantly on Desmond's lips, but she would not see it.

"And why didn't she still want to?" she inquired.

"You shall see her letter," Desmond said.

"No, thank you."

"She'll be glad you did," he declared. "It may clear things up."

So she read it, and reading, realized what it was to be on terms of a delightful intimacy with this man. Even flighty little Daisy Lonsdale was colored by the reflection of his urbanity. She wrote:

I hope you won't think me a beast. We've been such good chums that I should hate to do anything to you that doesn't seem quite square. But I should hate worse to see you trying to think me the right kind of wife for you, which I shouldn't be in the least. You're too serious—

Hilda Rosney looked up at him quizzically.

"She says 'you're too serious.'"

"Ah, there's a good deal in that," he admitted blandly.

She laughed.

"A good deal, then, that doesn't meet the eye" she retorted, reading on.

She handed him the letter, when she had come to the end of the third page.

"She seems to have a touching amount of faith in you," she remarked.

"She is a person of penetration," Desmond replied. "There is another page."

"Thanks, I've read enough."

"But the last is about you."

"About me?" she queried, taking it from him.

It ran:

Besides, though you've never let me see a wink of it, I know that you're completely in love with Hilda Rosney, and I know that she is with you.

Hilda put the letter down abruptly upon the table.

"Haven't you done with my hand?" she said.

"Nothing like!" he declared decidedly. "Hilda, is that true?"

"What, that you are completely in love with me? It sounds likely, doesn't it?"

"I don't know" he said gravely. "But it should, for it's the sober fact. May I believe that even a little part of the other is true of you?"

"You have cause to, haven't you, after this evening?" she answered.

"Well," he said, "I thought that perhaps your desire to shoot me into my duty might be taken as a hopeful sign."

She made no answer to his remark, and when he turned again, it was to find her face bent down to the table and hidden in her muff.

He put his hand gently upon her shoulder; but it shrank from his touch, and shook, to his intense astonishment, with a sob.

# ADVENTURINGS *in the* PSYCHICAL



## I.—GHOSTS AND THEIR MEANING



WITTY Frenchwoman was once asked if she believed in ghosts.

"No, not at all," was her reply. "But I am terribly afraid of them."

Most people feel precisely this way about ghosts, though few are candid enough to acknowledge it. In broad daylight, or when seated before a cheery fire among a group of congenial friends, it is easy to be skeptical, and to regard ghosts as mere products of imagination, superstition, credulity, hysteria, or indigestion. But it is notorious that even the most skeptical are liable to creepy sensations and sometimes outright panic if they experience "uncanny" sights or sounds in the darkness of the night, or in lonely, uninhabited places. Churchyards have never been popular resorts of those who go for a stroll in the cool of the evening. And let a house once get the reputation of being "haunted," it is next to impossible to find tenants for it.

Yet this almost universal attitude is entirely and fundamentally wrong. There is no reason for being afraid of ghosts, and there are many reasons for believing in them.

I do not, of course, mean to say that all ghosts are real ghosts. There are plenty of bogus ghosts, and there always will be, as long as men eat and drink too much, play practical jokes on one another, and allow their houses to

become run down and infested by rats and mice.

A single rat, scampering at midnight over the loose planks of an old attic, has often been quite sufficient to produce a counterfeit "poltergeist," or noisy ghost, of a highly impressive character. So, too, a pillow slip swaying from a clothesline is apt to seem most ghostly to a gentleman returning home from a late supper. Ghosts, like much else in this amazing world of ours, have to be pretty sharply scrutinized.

And the point is that, after centuries of contemptuous neglect, they have at last been made the subject of investigation by men competent for the task—men trained in the cautious methods of scientific inquiry, and insisting upon the strictest evidential standards, but devoid of prejudice or prepossession. Their researches are still in progress, but they have already demonstrated that amid a multitude of sham ghosts there are perfectly authentic apparitions, with a definite object in their haunting, and displaying credentials too convincing to be denied.

What is still more important, the labors of these scientific ghostologists have also resulted in throwing much light on the nature, origin, and habits of real ghosts.

Usually, it seems, a genuine ghost is seen or heard but once or twice, and then, having accomplished its purpose, it departs to return no more. But there

are plenty of well-attested cases in which a ghost attaches itself to a house or family, and keeps up its haunting for years, sometimes for centuries.

A noteworthy, though in this country little known, example of this type of apparition is the so-called Drummer of Cortachy Castle. This is a Scottish ghost that haunts the ancient stronghold of the Ogilvys, Earls of Airlie, but is in evidence only when a death is about to occur in the Ogilvy family.

Tradition has it that, hundreds of years ago, when the Scots were little better than barbarians, a Highland chieftain sent a drummer to Cortachy Castle with a message that was not at all to the liking of the Ogilvy of that time. As an appropriate token of his displeasure, he seized the luckless drummer, stuffed him into his drum—he must have been a very small drummer, and have carried a very big drum—and hurled him from the topmost battlements of the castle, breaking his neck.

Just before he was tossed off, the drummer threatened to make a ghost of himself, and haunt the Ogilvys forevermore. He has been, it would seem, as good as his word. Every once in a while ghostly drumming is heard at Cortachy Castle, and always the death of an Ogilvy follows. An especially impressive account of one instance of this peculiar and most unpleasant haunting has been left by a Miss Dalrymple, who happened to be a guest at Cortachy during Christmas week of 1844.

It was her first visit to the castle, and she was entirely unaware of the existence of the family ghost. On the evening of her arrival, while dressing for dinner, she was startled by hearing under her window music like the muffled beating of a drum. She looked out, but could see nothing, and presently the drumming died away. For the time she thought no more of it, but at dinner she turned to her host, the Earl of Airlie, and asked:

"My lord, who is your drummer?"

His lordship made no reply, Lady Airlie became exceedingly pale, and several of the company, all of whom had

heard the question, looked embarrassed. Realizing that she had made a slip of some sort, Miss Dalrymple quickly changed the subject, but after dinner, naturally feeling somewhat curious, she brought it up with one of the younger members of the family, and was answered:

"What! Have you never heard of the Drummer of Cortachy?"

"No," said she. "Who in the world is he?"

"Why, he is a person who goes about playing his drum whenever there is a death impending in our family. The last time he was heard was shortly before the death of the late countess, the earl's first wife, and that is why Lady Airlie turned so pale when you mentioned it."

The next night Miss Dalrymple heard the drumming again, and, falling into a panic when she learned that nobody else had heard it, hurriedly left Cortachy Castle. But the drumming was not for her. True to tradition, the drummer was concerned only with announcing the death of an Ogilvy, one of whom, the Lady Airlie who had been so disturbed by Miss Dalrymple's question, died soon afterward while on a visit to Brighton.

Five years later the drumming was once more heard, this time by an Englishman who had been invited to spend a few days with the Earl of Airlie's oldest son, Lord Ogilvy, at a shooting box near Cortachy. Crossing a gloomy moor, in company with an old Highlander, the Englishman suddenly stopped, and, with a look of amazement, exclaimed:

"What can a band be doing in this lonely place? Has Lord Ogilvy brought a band with him?"

The Highlander glanced at him strangely.

"I hear naething," he said.

"Why, yes, can't you hear it? A band playing in the distance—or at any rate, somebody playing a drum."

"An' is it a drum ye hear?" cried the Highlander. "Then 'tis something no canny."

In another moment the lighted win-

dows of the shooting box came into view, and the Englishman hastened forward, fully expecting to have the mystery solved. But he found no musicians—only a scene of considerable confusion. Lord Ogilvy, it appeared, had just started for London, summoned by news that his father was dangerously ill.

And the very next day, as the Englishman's Highlander guide was not at all surprised to learn, the Earl of Airlie died.

Of all family ghosts, however, none is so strongly substantiated by documentary evidence as the Knocking Ghost of the Basil Woodds, an old English family. This ghost began operations about the time of the Stuart Restoration, and has ever since continued to announce, by three or more loud knocks, the approaching death of a Basil Woodd. First-hand and thoroughly trustworthy accounts are extant of its activity in quite recent times.

December 15, 1893, Mr. Charles H. L. Woodd died at Hampstead, England, after a brief illness. The night before he died the Knocking Ghost was heard by two persons, at Hampstead by his daughter, and in London by his son, the Reverend Trevor Basil Woodd. Both have made statements describing their singular experiences.

"On Thursday evening, December 14, 1893, after church," says the Reverend Mr. Woodd, "I was sitting before my fire. I knew my father was ill, and had a presentiment that he was dangerously ill, though if I had known this I should have remained at Hampstead, where I had been that day. As I sat, I distinctly heard three knocks, perhaps more, like the sound of some one emptying a tobacco pipe upon the bars of my fire grate.

"Thinking it might be a warning, I did not go to bed for an hour, fearing I would be sent for. At one a. m. I was awakened by a ringing of the front doorbell and knocking. It was my father's butler, who told me the doctor had sent for me, as my father was very ill. I said to my housekeeper:

"I must go. I feel sure that my

father is dying because I heard the Woodd knocks, as I sat in my chair before going to bed."

"On my arrival my first question was: 'Is he still alive?' for I believed he must have passed away at the time of the knocking. He died at eight-forty-five next morning."

Mr. Woodd's housekeeper corroborates this statement. As to the knocking heard at Hampstead, the daughter, Mrs. Winifred Dumbell, testifies:

"On December 14, 1893, Thursday morning, hearing my father, Mr. Charles Woodd, was not well, I left Epsom, where I had been staying, for Hampstead, and found my father in bed and very weak, but I was in no way anxious about him, as I did not suppose him to be seriously ill. At eleven o'clock at night, being tired and finding I could not assist my mother or the nurse, I lay down in an adjoining room, leaving the door wide open, and fell asleep.

"In a short time I was suddenly awakened by a loud rapping as if at the door. I jumped up and ran into the passage, thinking my mother had called me. I listened at the door of my father's room, but no one was moving. I lay down again and instantly fell asleep, when exactly the same thing occurred. I did not actually sleep again, and cannot say whether any sound made me get up the third time, but I went in search of the doctor and gathered that he was anxious about my father, who was getting much weaker. We were all aroused, and about eight o'clock a. m. my father died.

"I did not connect this rapping with the Woodd warning, as all was so sudden and unexpected, but on mentioning it at breakfast the next morning to my brother, the Reverend Trevor Basil Woodd, he told me he also heard a similar warning in his rooms at Vauxhall Bridge Road about the same time."

To mention only one other of the many instances that might be cited, the Knocking Ghost was again heard on June 3, 1895, just twenty-four hours before the death of Mr. Thomas Basil Woodd at Hampstead. Again,

too, it was heard by more than one person and in more than one place, by Mr. Woodd's daughters, Fanny and Kate, and by his niece, Miss Ethel G. Woodd, who was at the time visiting friends in Yorkshire, and at first mistook the Knocking Ghost for somebody hammering nails into the wall of the next room. Oddly enough, this was also the way it sounded to Fanny Woodd, in London, as appears from the following statement signed by her:

On June 3, 1895, at ten-thirty p. m., Fanny Woodd, staying with Mrs. Stoney, 83 Wharton Road, West Kensington, heard knocks, apparently from next door, as of nails being hammered in and pictures hung, which seemed so unlikely at that hour of night that the next morning she mentioned it to Mrs. Stoney, whose bedroom was just below hers, asking if she had heard it or could account for it.

But Mrs. Stoney had heard nothing, and the next-door neighbor, Mrs. Harriet Taylor, rather tartly declared that "There has been no putting up of pictures or knocking of any sort in this house for quite two years. We are also early risers, and are always in bed and asleep by ten p. m." That same day Miss Woodd rejoined her father and sister in Hampstead, and was astonished to hear that the latter had been awakened about half-past ten the previous night by loud knockings against the window shutters.

A few hours more and the mystery was solved by the startlingly sudden death of Mr. Woodd, from an attack of apoplexy. The Knocking Ghost of the Basil Woodds had as usual lived up to its reputation.

The giving of death warnings is by no means confined to family ghosts, as may be sufficiently indicated by relating an incident that happened in Canada some years ago, and that has always impressed me as one of the best ghost stories I have ever heard. It was told me by an actor in the strange little drama, and knowing as I do the persons concerned I have not the slightest hesitation in vouching for its authenticity.

In this instance the ghost was seen by a clergyman, the Reverend John Langtry, who afterward became a prominent dignitary of the English Church in Canada. His home was in Toronto, but on the occasion of the ghostly visitation he was at the house of a Mr. and Mrs. Ruttan, in a small town some fifty or sixty miles north of Toronto. Mr. Ruttan was another Church of England clergyman, and was a warm friend of Doctor Langtry's. This time, however, the latter had journeyed to see him simply on a matter of diocesan business, and was anxious to complete it and get back to Toronto.

To his disappointment he found that Mr. Ruttan had been called out of town, and would not be home until a late hour, possibly not until the following day. On the chance that he might return earlier than expected, Doctor Langtry accepted Mrs. Ruttan's invitation to spend the evening with her.

As they were chatting together—she being so seated that her back was toward the door leading from the parlor, whereas Doctor Langtry's position gave him a full view of the hall—she noticed that all at once he stopped in the middle of a sentence, leaned forward, and stared fixedly into the hall. She instantly turned her head, and followed the direction of his gaze, but could see nothing.

"What is the matter, Doctor Langtry?" she asked. "What are you looking at?"

"Nothing, nothing," he muttered, recovering himself with an effort. "I fancied for a moment—"

He paused, then changed the conversation. But Mrs. Ruttan—from whom I got the story—saw that from time to time he glanced furtively into the hall, and finally half rose from his seat, his face white, his limbs trembling.

"Doctor Langtry!" was her startled exclamation. "Are you ill? Whatever is the matter?"

"Oh," he said shortly, "it is only a momentary faintness, I shall be all right presently. The fatigue of the journey must have unstrung me. I will trouble



you to get me a glass of water, and then I think I will return to the hotel."

He drank the water, and rose to go. But when near the front door, he turned to Mrs. Ruttan, and said:

"I don't believe I have asked after your daughter. I trust she is well?"

The Ruttans had one child, a beautiful little girl.

"She is quite well, thank you. Or was when I last saw her. I put her to bed just before you came in."

With his hand on the knob of the door, Doctor Langtry again paused irresolutely.

"If it's not too much trouble," he asked, "I wish you would go upstairs and make sure she is all right now."

Wondering at his request and at his manner, Mrs. Ruttan complied, and presently returned to report that the child was sleeping peacefully. Doctor Langtry bowed with an air of obvious relief, bade her good night, and left the house. But next day, after he had transacted his business, and was about to start for Toronto, he said to Mr. Ruttan, who had accompanied him to the train:

"Ruttan, if your little girl should happen to fall ill while away from home, go to her at once, and take Mrs. Ruttan with you, even if you have no reason to feel that the illness is serious."

Mr. Ruttan laughed.

"Of course we would go to her. You may be sure of that. But why—"

"Ask me no questions," said Doctor Langtry, "but bear my request in mind if the occasion should arise."

Within a very short time the child, visiting an aunt in a near-by town, was taken ill, failed rapidly, and died almost before her parents, who had been hastily telegraphed for, could reach her bedside. Doctor Langtry's warning immediately recurred to them, and they wrote him, beseeching an explanation.

"The reason I was anxious about your little girl," he then told them, "was because the night I was sitting with Mrs. Ruttan I saw an angel enter the hall, pass up the stairs, and return, carrying the child in its arms."

But the kind of ghost most frequent-

ly seen is that which appears not before but immediately after, or coincidental with, a death. Its purpose is not to give warning of impending tragedy, but to convey the news of a tragedy already consummated. There are thousands of instances of this sort, so well authenticated as to compel credence. Only the other day an interesting case was reported to me by a gentleman living in Burlington, Vermont, the nephew of the lady—a Mrs. Hazard of Newport, Rhode Island—who saw the ghost.

She was ill at the time, and under the care of a trained nurse. One afternoon, her physician having allowed her to sit up for a couple of hours, she was seated in a chair by the side of her bed, when the nurse noticed her open wide her eyes and turn her head as if following the movements of some one. Then she heard her say, in a tone of surprise:

"Hello! Hello! There he goes! There he goes!"

As far as the nurse could see, nobody was in the room with them. But, not wishing to alarm her patient, she merely asked:

"Who is it, Mrs. Hazard?"

"Chet Keech. But he doesn't see me. And now he's gone."

Later in the day the nurse mentioned the incident to Mrs. Hazard's daughter, asking her if she knew anybody by the name of Chet Keech.

"Why, certainly I do," was the reply. "He is my cousin, and lives in Danielson, Connecticut."

That day Chet Keech had died at Danielson, as a letter informed the Hazards next morning.

Sometimes ghosts of this type present themselves in such a way as to leave no doubt as to the fact and manner of the death of the person seen. As striking a case in point as has come to my knowledge—and I have a fairly wide acquaintance with ghost lore—is afforded by the singular experience of an old friend of mine, Edward Jackson.

Born in India, the son of an English army officer of high rank, Jackson was from his boyhood of a roving and

adventurous disposition. He went in for all forms of athletics, more particularly boxing, cricket, and polo, and before he left India was one of the best known and most popular men in the younger sporting set.

He was still in his early twenties when he came to the United States, drifting West to go on a ranch in Wyoming. Tiring of this, though not of his fondness for adventure, he found work in a Lake Superior mine, where his quickly demonstrated ability to take care of himself in a rough-and-tumble encounter won him the position of superintendent over a gang of men whom it had hitherto been most difficult to superintend.

As superintendent he was privileged to live by himself in a small two-room cabin, somewhat neater and more comfortable than the ordinary sleeping shacks. It was in this cabin that he saw the ghost.

"I had returned from the mine one evening, thoroughly tired out," he said, in telling me the story, "and sat down to rest for a few minutes before an open fire. While I was sitting there, half dozing, I felt a cold current of air, and looked up, thinking that somebody had thrown the door open.

"The door was not open, but standing between me and it was the figure of a young man whom I instantly recognized as a boyhood chum in India. He was dressed in polo costume—we had often played the game together—but for a moment I forgot all about the incongruity between his dress and the rough, outlandish place in which I then saw him. I jumped up, exclaiming:

"'By Jove, Jack, I'm glad to see you. When did you get here? And how did—'

"I stopped. He had been standing with his profile toward me. Now he turned, facing me, and I saw that he was ghastly white, with a deep cut over one eye. Without a word he walked past me, gazing at me solemnly, and disappeared in the inner room.

"I don't think I am a coward, but I confess that for a moment I felt faint. Recovering, and believing that some-

body must be playing me a trick, I made a dash after him.

"There was no one there—and no way in which anybody could have got out unknown to me.

"That night I wrote to my father, telling him what had happened. In his reply he informed me that my friend had been killed the same day that I saw him in my cabin on the shore of Lake Superior. He had been playing polo in far-away India, had been thrown from his horse, and had struck on his head, sustaining a wound exactly similar to that I had seen in my vision."

Not all ghosts, it is pleasant to know, bring notification of impending or already consummated tragedy. Many exist solely for the purpose of giving a warning of trouble which may be averted by taking proper precautions, and sometimes they indicate plainly what ought to be done. Take this instance, reported by Lady Eardley:

"One day I went to my bathroom, locked the door, undressed, and was just about to get into the bath, when I heard a voice say:

"'Unlock the door!'

"I was startled and looked around, but of course no one was there. I had stepped into the bath when I heard the voice twice more, saying:

"'Unlock the door!'

"On this I jumped out and did unlock the door, and then stepped into the bath again. As I got in I fainted away and fell down flat in the water. Fortunately, as I fell I was just able to catch at a bell handle, which was attached to the wall above the tub. My pull brought the maid, who found me, she said, lying with my head under water. She picked me up and carried me out. If the door had been locked I would certainly have been drowned."

Still more impressive is an experience in the life of an Englishwoman named Mrs. Jean Gwynne Bettany. Her statement is corroborated by her father and mother.

"On one occasion," she says, "I was walking in a country lane. I was reading geometry as I walked along, a subject little likely to produce fancies or

morbid phenomena of any kind, when, in a moment, I saw a bedroom in my house known as the 'White Room,' and upon the floor lay my mother, to all appearance dead. The vision must have remained some minutes, during which time my real surroundings appeared to pale and die out; but as the vision faded actual surroundings came back, at first dimly, and then clearly.

"I could not doubt that what I had seen was real, so, instead of going home, I went at once to the house of our medical man, and he immediately set out with me, on the way putting questions I could not answer, as my mother was to all appearance well when I left home.

"I led the doctor straight to the 'White Room,' where we found my mother actually lying as in my vision. This was true even to minute details. She had been seized suddenly by an attack at the heart, and would soon have breathed her last but for the doctor's timely advent."

Mrs. Bettany's father, Mr. S. G. Gwynne, adds:

"I distinctly remember being surprised by seeing my daughter, in company with the family doctor, outside the door of my residence; and I asked: 'Who is ill?' She replied: 'Mamma.' She led the way at once to the 'White Room,' where we found my wife lying in a swoon on the floor. It was when I asked when she had been taken ill that I found it must have been after my daughter had left the house. None of the servants in the house knew anything of the sudden illness, which our doctor assured me would have been fatal had he not arrived when he did."

In this last case, it should be noted the ghost seen was an apparition not of a dead person, but of a living one. This is most important, from the point of view of gaining insight into the nature and characteristics of ghosts.

The investigators who, a matter of twenty-five or thirty years ago, began for the first time to inquire into the subject in a scientific way, early made the interesting discovery that phantasms of the living are seen quite as frequently

as phantasms of the dead. Besides which, it was found that ghosts could be produced experimentally—that by a mere act of willing one person could make another, sometimes miles distant, see a ghost. Many successful experiments of the kind, supported by ample corroborative evidence, are now on record. For example:

Mr. B. F. Sinclair, at the time a resident of Lakewood, New Jersey, had occasion to go to New York to be absent several days. His wife was not feeling well when he left home, and he was greatly worried about her.

"That night," to continue the narrative in his own words, "before I went to bed, I thought I would try to find out, if possible, her condition. I had undressed, and was sitting on the edge of the bed, when I covered my face with my hands and willed myself in Lakewood at home, to see if I could see her. After a little, I seemed to be standing in her room before the bed, and saw her lying there, looking much better. I felt satisfied she was better, and so spent the week more comfortably regarding her condition.

"On Saturday I went home. When she saw me, she remarked:

"'I thought something had surely happened to you. I saw you standing in front of the bed the night you left, as plain as could be, and I have been worrying about you ever since.'

"After explaining my effort to find out her condition, everything became clear to her. She had seen me when I was trying to see her. I thought at the time I was going to see her and make her see me."

In at least one instance another experimenter, a German savant named Wesermann, performed the seemingly impossible feat of creating, by a simple act of volition, a ghost not of himself but of a person who was dead.

Herr Wesermann had been greatly troubled by the conduct of a friend, a young officer in the German army, and in the hope of reforming him, "willed" one evening that at eleven o'clock that night he should see in a dream an apparition of a lady in whom he had

once been greatly interested, but who had been dead five years.

It chanced that at eleven o'clock, instead of being in bed and asleep, Herr Wesermann's friend was chatting with a brother officer. Nevertheless, the apparition came to him at the hour appointed, and was seen, not only by him, but by his companion also.

The door of his chamber seemed to open, and the ghost of his dead sweetheart walked in, "dressed in white, with black kerchief and bared head." Both officers started to their feet, and watched with bulging eyes while the ghost bowed gravely to them, turned, and without a word disappeared.

They followed instantly, rushing into the corridor, but saw only the sentry, who solemnly assured them that nobody but themselves had entered or left the room.

Facts like these naturally raised in the minds of many of the investigators a belief that quite possibly ghosts could be explained without resorting to the alternative of dogmatically denying their reality or regarding them as supernatural beings. This belief was strengthened by other facts brought to light in the course of experiments to determine the actuality of telepathy, or thought transference as it used to be called.

It was discovered that, under certain favoring conditions, thoughts could indeed be transmitted from mind to mind without passing through the ordinary known channels of communication; and furthermore that thoughts thus transmitted were often apprehended, not as mere ideas, but in the form of auditory or visual hallucinations.

Thus, if it were a question of "telepathing" the idea of a certain playing card, say the three of diamonds, the recipient, instead of simply getting the thought, "three of diamonds," might hear an hallucinatory voice saying to him, "three of diamonds," or might see three diamond-shaped objects floating before his eyes, the "ghosts" of three diamonds, so to speak.

Of even greater significance was the discovery that it frequently happened

also that instead of getting the message which the experimenter had consciously attempted to send, the recipient would get other ideas merely latent in the experimenter's mind—ideas connected with his environment, something he had been doing, etc. Or the recipient might get the right message several hours after the experiment had been made—receiving it, for example, in a dream.

The obvious conclusion was that telepathy must be a function not of a person's ordinary consciousness, but of what psychologists call the subconsciousness, thus accounting for the difficulty of invariably obtaining satisfactory results in telepathic experiments.

In the light of these discoveries, then, the belief has been gaining ground that ghosts—real ghosts—are nothing more than mental images impressed upon one mind by another through the subtle power of telepathy, and apprehended in the form of hallucinations of the various senses, just as any ordinary telepathic message may be apprehended.

A person is stricken with a mortal illness, is fatally injured, or is passing through some other great crisis likely to terminate in death. Consciously or subconsciously, he thinks of loved ones far away, and is seized with a longing to get into touch with them once more, if only to notify them of the catastrophe threatening him.

Across the intervening space, by what mechanism we as yet do not know, his thought wings its way to them, finds lodgment in their subconsciousness, and thence, when favoring conditions arise—as in sleep, reverie, a moment of mental relaxation—is projected into their consciousness before, at the time of, or after the sender's death, and is seen or heard, it may be, as a Phantom Drummer, a Knocking Ghost, or the phantasmal image of the sender himself.

If, however, conditions are such as to prevent the message from emerging from the recipient's subconsciousness into his field of conscious vision, it may on occasion, as telepathic experiments have proved, be retransmitted to a third party, and by him be apprehended; as,

for example, the Drummer of Cortachy, in the two instances cited above, was heard not by members of the Ogilvy family, but by comparative strangers.

Or, again, a ghost may at times be the product of the seer's own subconsciousness. Take, for example, the case of the ghostly voice heard in the bathroom of Lady Eardley. It is a well-established medical fact that many diseases, in their initial stages, cause organic changes too slight to be noticed by the sufferer's upper consciousness, but plainly perceptible to his subconsciousness which, through symbolical dreams or hallucinations, frequently seeks to convey to the upper consciousness a warning that all is not well.

I myself have had such an experience. Several years ago, beginning in the summer, I was troubled by a recurrent nightmare in which, although the details were not always the same, the central incident never varied. Always the nightmare ended with a phantom cat clawing viciously at my throat. I did not then know as much about dreams as I do now, so, beyond thinking vaguely that "it must mean something," I paid no attention to this repeated nightmare.

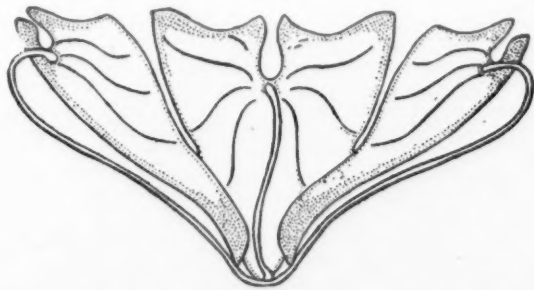
At the end of six months I had an attack of grippe, necessitating treatment by a throat specialist, who speed-

ily discovered in my throat a growth of which I consciously had had no knowledge. With its removal the recurrent dream of the cat instantly ceased to trouble me.

Lady Eardley's case was, doubtless, quite similar, the only difference being that the subconscious warning was conveyed to her upper consciousness, not in dream, but as an auditory hallucination. And, in the somewhat parallel case of the ghost seen by the Reverend Doctor Langtry, it seems a safe assumption that if the frightened clergyman had advised the child's father to place her under medical care at once, the subsequent fatality might have been averted.

Surely, instead of refusing to believe in ghosts, yet being afraid of them, it is wiser to believe in them and seek to get at their exact meaning.

I must in all frankness add, however, that the telepathic explanation of ghosts—of which I have here given only the roughest outline—is still the subject of much controversy among ghostologists. But, in my opinion, the day will come when its validity will be universally recognized, and when everybody will not merely believe in ghosts, but will take them for granted, like any other fact in nature.





**M**ISS FINGALL was thirty-seven, a thin, shrinking, quiet woman, with a long narrow face that had many lines on it; smooth brown hair, drawn back into a knot; and gray eyes, vague and unintelligent, but kind—always kind. Her manner conveyed an unconscious knowledge of her own dullness, even of her occasional silliness, and of futile efforts to conquer it. The failure did not apparently distress her; she was placid and content, a human cul-de-sac of which the end was soon reached, but that was so peaceful and devoid of rough places it was impossible to regret the time spent in wandering along its unexciting way.

She was quite alone in the world, but she had money; it had come to her from the last of her relations, together with a pretty cottage at Wavercombe and an old-fashioned house in Montagu Place near the British Museum. Previously she had lived high up in an economical flat at Battersea, liking it better than the conditions her greater wealth brought about, for the London house was ugly; and at Wavercombe she felt blighted. The residents who called found her dull and uninteresting; not even picturesque or pretty, but just a rather dreary woman whose mouth drooped at the corners and whose eyes seemed to betray that she was wondering why they had come and when they would go.

Near the cottage, on the main road, there was a high brick wall with a stone coping to it, shutting in a big house and some acres of ground. Here lived Sir John Collop—sixty and gouty; his wife fifty—red-faced and thickset. A son

who was a cub, and two daughters who would have some thousands when they married—as yet their marriages were not arranged.

Lady Collop duly called on Miss Fingall, stayed ten minutes, and said goodbye with patronizing coldness. Miss Fingall returned the visit, and left with a sense of having been vaguely snubbed. Later she was invited to a garden party where she stood apart, felt out of it, and came away depressed. This programme was repeated round the neighborhood.

In London it was no better. She knew no one. Yes, there was the doctor who attended her for a severe cold; he looked round at the large pieces of furniture, noted the silver salvers on the sideboard in the dining room as he took his way briskly through the hall, realized that she must be well off, and gathered that she was lonely. He sent his wife to see her. They invited her to dine; she went in an ill-fitting frock with her hair badly done, and hardly spoke.

And there was the lawyer. His wife made overtures, too, but the result was the same; Miss Fingall was no good for social purposes. Yet one day when she heard his child was ill she sent it a rose tree in a pot; a grateful mother came calling a fortnight later; Miss Fingall said: "It's very kind of you to come," in a slightly treble voice, and looked at her dismayed.

She tried to play her part. Sometimes she took a box at the theatre and asked the lawyer and his wife, or the doctor and his wife, to dine and go on with her. They found the dinner un-



imaginative and the conversation tiresome. At the play they were always conscious of that burden in the box—their hostess.

One day what seemed to be a trivial event changed everything. Lady Collop, being in Great Russell Street, remembered that Montague Place was just round the corner. It was half-past four, and a suggestion of tea was in the air.

Miss Fingall was sitting by a dull-red fire, in the black-looking drawing room, with shut windows, though it was late spring and the sun was shining.

"It's very kind of you to come," she said meekly. "I very seldom see any one."

Lady Collop explained—it took from the grace of her visit—that she had been south near and hinted that she was tired.

"I didn't think you'd come so far on purpose to see me," Miss Fingall said, in her simple manner that held no offense or sarcasm. "I sit here for weeks sometimes, but no one comes."

"You must find it very dull," with a shade of contempt.

"Oh, yes, it's dull; but of course I must expect that."

"I suppose you've some occupations—or amusements?"

"Yes, but I don't find them interesting."

Lady Collop thought: "What a fool the woman is."

Mercifully the tea came in; good old-fashioned china cups and a silver teapot with a milk jug and sugar basin to match, bread and butter in large, thin, even slices neatly arranged on a plate, and a round currant cake of which a quarter had been cut out. It all looked dull and stale; as if it had been designed generations ago, by people who had gone; but Lady Collop warmed up a little as she doubled over a slice of bread and butter and realized that the outside of her cup was quite hot.

"Are you coming to Wavercombe for Whitsuntide?" she asked.

"I don't know," Miss Fingall answered vaguely. "Sometimes I think I

will go somewhere else, but I don't know where it would be."

"I'm going down to a new place tomorrow—Leesbury—a few miles from Great Missenden. It's very small, just found out. They say the air is good, and there's a little hotel called the White Hart."

"Are you going to stay a long time?"

"No, only a few hours. A second cousin of mine is there with her two children—she is ill, or thinks she is."

"I dare say you're very sorry for her." Miss Fingall was not interested.

"She has brought it on herself," Lady Collop answered in the tone of one who never transgressed. "She made an imprudent marriage—a man who spent her money and then deserted her. She divorced him, of course."

"Her friends must be very unhappy about her." This by way of a variation on her previous remark.

"She hasn't any friends and her husband alienated all his; she's only my second cousin." The relationship was evidently a grievance.

"If I went there I could go and see her, if you like?"

Lady Collop jumped at the suggestion. "How very kind of you. She's at Highbrook Farm, a mile off. The air would do you good, and I am told the White Hart is very comfortable."

"Is she young?"

"She's eight and twenty. Her eldest child is just three, the baby is fifteen months; her husband left her before it was born. You must tell me about her when you come to Wavercombe in the spring." Lady Collop had no intention of corresponding on the subject.

"I haven't made up my mind that I'll go yet," Miss Fingall answered, with mild indecision.

"I should think it would be much better for you than staying here," her visitor snapped, and departed.

The dull woman sat by the fire with her hands folded till the light faded and the servant brought an old-fashioned lamp. Then, half in a dream, as if she were impelled to do it, she got

up and wrote to the White Hart for a bed and sitting room facing the road.

"I like to see things passing," she thought, and sent the letter to the post. She felt as if she had to do it—as if it were taken from her hands. She went about the house with a sense of mystery and smiled at it.

Four days at the White Hart. There was a common opposite and beyond it some newly built villas—a sign of the days to come. On the fifth afternoon, as the wooden clock on the mantelpiece struck three, she got up as if a spring had been touched, rang the bell, and asked if she could have a fly, to drive to Highbrook Farm. All the way there she felt as if she were being sent rather than going of her own accord; it was very curious.

The farmhouse stood well back from the road; it was old and picturesque, with small windows and heavy, worn-out doors that creaked and groaned at being used. Miss Fingall's heart beat quickly as she asked for Mrs. Bowton.

The farmer's wife called upstairs: "Bessie, are you there?"

A pleasant-faced Scotch girl with red hair appeared; she looked like a marigold in an old garden.

"Mrs. Bowton's at home," she said, "but I don't know if she'll see you. Are you a friend?"

"I'm not a friend yet," the meek voice answered, "but Lady Collop thought I might come and see her."

The mention of the name had due effect. She was shown up to a room on the first floor and the other side of the house—evidently one that was kept for visitors. A cottage piano, that did not seem to belong to it, was open, and a Polonaise of Chopin's was on the music stand; a box of books was by the round table that had been pushed from the middle of the room to one side; in a corner of the old-fashioned sofa some crochet antimacassars were heaped, suggesting that they had been collected from the backs of the chairs. Facing the entrance was a mullion window with a deep ledge inside it, and close to it a wicker chair with many cushions—

as if some uneasy person had been sitting on it to look out on the garden below. The garden was bounded by a privet hedge with a gate and a lilac bush in full bloom; over the hedge honeysuckle straggled; beyond were out-buildings, a field and trees suggesting wooded distances.

While Miss Fingall stood hesitating there entered from a doorway on the farther side of the room a fragile-looking woman, a girl rather, with a white face and dark eyes that stared bewildered at the visitor.

"Lady Collop thought I might come—I am a neighbor for a little while. I hope you won't mind?" She was apologetic, almost frightened.

Mrs. Bowton looked at her again and seemed to take in her whole personality.

"How kind of you. Do sit down." The voice was magnetic and grateful but uneven; it came with an effort. "Did Cousin Augusta send you?" She indicated a place on the sofa.

"She told me you were here alone and thought I might like to stay at the White Hart." Miss Fingall wondered what to say next, but she had no fear of being snubbed.

"Are you there alone?" the girl asked; her wide eyes looked sympathetic, but she seemed to be weary with thinking of things that were sad and frightening.

"Oh, yes, I'm always alone." Then hurriedly: "Lady Collop said you had two children?"

"Yes, two babies. They are asleep now, the sun made them drowsy—"

A fit of coughing stopped her, her breathing came with difficulty.

"Oh, you're not well—you're not well!"

"No, I'm not well." Then quickly: "But I'm going to get strong. It's beautiful air. Shall you stay long?"

"I don't know," Miss Fingall said helplessly. "I never know. Perhaps you'll come and see me one day at the White Hart—it's very comfortable there." She was unconsciously repeating Lady Collop's remark, but it was so difficult to find things to say.

"If I can—or won't you come

here? I'm not able to walk much. Come to tea to-morrow—no, on Thursday—and I'll show you my babies." Her voice was tender when she mentioned them. "They are very little," she added, and smiled.

"I should like it." An expression that was almost a surprise had lighted up Miss Fingall's face; she was not accustomed to cordiality; she ventured to look round. "I see you have a piano," she said. "I'm very fond of music."

"I hired it from Great Missenden. It is not up to much, but I like the yellow silk in the front; it's the color of the sun; I tell myself that on the rainy days," Mrs. Bowton answered, with a little smile. It stirred something in her visitor's heart and gave her still more courage.

"Perhaps you'll play to me one day if I come? I used to—a little—but I don't know what is the matter with my fingers—I could play Chopin—"

"Of course I will, as much as you like," Mrs. Bowton said impulsively, "and I can lend you books—I have them down every week." She nodded to the box. "You'll be happy at the White Hart," she went on, "the country round here is charming, and the woods are full of bluebells already. Oh, it's lovely—I wish I could walk." She coughed again.

"I don't think you're at all well," Miss Fingall repeated dully.

But the dullness only provoked the girl's compassion. "Why are you all alone at the White Hart? Do you live alone?" she asked.

"Yes, I'm always alone. I haven't any one at all belonging to me. You must like having your two babies."

"I do." Her voice seemed to come from the depths of her heart, "I adore them. Did Cousin Augusta tell you about me," she asked suddenly, "that I had divorced my husband?"

"Yes, she told me." Then slowly: "I suppose you had to do it?" Evidently divorce was a strange subject, not usually discussed.

"He didn't care for me any longer—

he liked some one else better. I had to do it."

Miss Fingall nodded her head.

"You had to do it," she echoed.

It seemed in some bewildering fashion to give her understanding, to make things clear. They looked at each other for a moment in silence, then Miss Fingall rose regretfully.

"I think I ought to go—"

She hoped to be pressed to stay longer.

But Mrs. Bowton made no effort to detain her. "You will come on Thursday," she said, "at four?"

She looked searchingly into the plain, sensitive face again and, for no reason that she tried to analyze, her heart reached out to this timid spinster who was evidently kind and gentle, but unconsciously desolate, half paralyzed by her own loneliness. Miss Fingall almost visibly shrank before the dark eyes as if she feared the tragedy written in them would make some appeal to her, and there was nothing she could do, no comfort she could offer; they frightened her and filled her with vague unhappiness.

All the way back to the hotel—her little steps made it seem very long—she said to herself over and over again: "She must have suffered dreadful pain. I'm very sorry for her."

She sat at the window looking blankly out at the roadway and the common; and the empty villas waiting for the unknown people who would come to live in them. Suddenly a motor car pulled up. A cloaked and hooded and veiled woman sat in it. The chauffeur asked the hostler the way to Highbrook Farm, and the car whizzed onward.

"Perhaps some one else is going to see her," Miss Fingall thought; "it will cheer her up. She looks as if she suffered dreadful pain," she repeated once more, and shuddered.

Miss Fingall was right. Linda Bowton had suffered "dreadful pain"; it was killing to her—pain and the longing to live for the children she adored.

"Nothing will matter," she said to herself when her visitor had gone, "if

I can only live and keep them. I will bear anything—suffer anything if I may do that—oh, dear God, give me my children well and happy—torture me as you will, but give me them! We'll go away somewhere. I'll earn money for them and be happy. Oh, my darlings, sometimes I cannot bear the awful fear of leaving you! If that happened—oh, no, no, dear God, be merciful!" She reached up her hands appealingly. "Oh, no—no—no!" she entreated.

Then in sheer desperation, in a wild struggle for control and forgetfulness, she went to the piano; and the means by which she hoped to earn money became apparent. Her soul seemed to go to the tips of her fingers—into the notes—till the dead lived again and the air was full of sound, of voices, of secrets they whispered. The player listened, leaning forward, without lifting her hands, without ceasing; she could not see them, but she knew they were there—very near—the black dots and lines on the page before her held their messages, the notes beneath her hands were the keys to a world that was quite near her, a world that had been, and was, and was to be. The strain was too great; she broke down; the handkerchief she put to her lips had a red mark on it when she took it away.

"I can't! I can't!" she cried as if to those who knew. She put her hands over her eyes; noiselessly they stole away, very softly the gates shut, the room was empty. She felt as if she had stood watching the dark road that leads from life to death, from death to life, knowing that soon she would be a fugitive seeking shelter, looking back at the world, wringing her hands at the children who stayed in it, at the winds that whispered and whirled and swirled her onward, at the relentless forces before which the loosened soul was helpless.

The farmer's wife entered; she held a card in her hand.

"There's another lady," she said. "She's come in a motor and wants to see you."

"Who is she?"

She read the name and staggered—

she had risen—back against the piano, her eyes flashing with amazement and anger.

"I can't see her! Tell her to go away!"

There was a little sound outside. "Oh, do see me, please." And a woman trailed in.

The farmer's wife went out and shut the door, leaving the two together.

"This is an outrage! How could you—could you come?"

The words burst from her lips; her heart was heaving.

"It took courage." The speaker's voice was sweet and reckless, suggestive of laughter, though she was grave now and evidently in some agitation. "Praise that if nothing else."

She held out her hands, but the other shrank back still a little farther.

"Look here, don't let's be theatrical. I get enough of that. We're two women, and we're sensible. You know I couldn't have come for anything disagreeable—or to be unkind." The accent was wrong, the tone and manner were common; somehow it helped to propitiate her listener.

"What do you want?" she asked.

"Mayn't I sit down? And I'll get off this outer skin if you don't mind."

The motor coat was opened and thrown aside, the veil unwound that had enveloped her head; there emerged a woman who was pretty and blue-eyed, with red lips and pink cheeks—of which art as well as nature had some knowledge—and masses of fair hair showed beneath the small hat. She was round, too, plump even, had evidently fed well and drunk well, lived in comfortable surroundings, and on easy terms with her dressmaker—a strange contrast to the girl, still shrinking against the piano, pale and emaciated, with all she had suffered making a passionate protest from her dark eyes.

For a full minute they looked at each other.

"What have you come for?" Linda asked again, trying to check her cough. "How could you dare?"

She was aghast still, stupefied with astonishment and the insult of the visit.

"Well, really, I don't know how I did," the other woman said, "but it's no good beating about the bush, is it? So I'll tell you."

"Does—he know?"

"Not he! I sneaked off—thinks I'm rehearsing. It's just this——" She stopped to gather courage. "Your face has haunted me since I looked at you in court the day of the case; you didn't know I was there, hidden away at the back? You mayn't believe it, but I felt a thorough beast. It isn't my fault as much as you think, for I give you my word, till two months before, I didn't dream he was married; hadn't an idea of it."

"He didn't tell you?"

"Not a word. He'd been going pretty rapid with Iris Howard, too, before he came on to me. She didn't care for him—I did. But I never dreamed of you; and I want you to know"—she rose quickly, her manner changed; it was impossible not to believe her—"that if I had I would have died first. I don't mind treating a man badly. What's he for, and don't they pay us out? But a woman—well, I never did it before—I never would—it's where I draw the line, and it's cut pretty deep into me. I can tell you, though he's just all the world to me now; same as he was to you, perhaps."

She stopped, but Linda made no sound, only stood staring at her.

"You see, Dicky's the sort of man who can't keep long to any woman. You've got two kiddies—I'm coming to them—and I expect he was longest with you. You've had the best of him, but once he's got a woman, why, he's tired of her in no time and wants another. He doesn't mean it, perhaps he can't help it; he's like a bee that goes along from flower to flower in a garden——"

"What have you come for?"

"I've told you already. I want you to know that I'm not as bad as you think. I want you to forgive me—some day, before you die, anyway. I haven't done you as much harm as you think, for if it hadn't been me it would have been somebody else, so what does

it matter? But it won't hurt me—when he goes, I mean—as much as it has you, for you see I've got the excitement of the theatre and I make lots of money; one can't have it all ways. He likes money, too—least, he likes what it does. He told me he had spent all yours; and you can't make more—I can. But, oh," she said, with a sudden rush of passion, "I wouldn't have done it, I wouldn't have done it if I'd known! I would have cut off my right hand first—and my foot, too, for the matter of that. Then I should never have danced again, anyhow."

"Is he going to marry you?"

"Don't know. Depends a good deal on whether I'll marry him. It's a big step, is marriage. Three months yet before the decree's made absolute, so there's plenty of time. He would if I had the kids——"

"If you had them!" Her listener turned on her like a tigress. "I would rather see them lying dead and wrap their little shrouds round them with my own hands! Does he want them?" she asked, with a sudden drop.

The woman nodded.

"Does he care anything about me?"

"He's awfully sorry you're ill. Hasn't been up to much himself lately—sent for Doctor Donaldson—and asked all about you."

"Then he knows—but it isn't true—he's wrong."

Linda looked up with a drawn face. "I am stronger than he thinks. I shall get well—I will."

"Well, I hope so, of course; for one thing, if you die I shall feel like a murderess. But look here; we never know what's before us, and what I want to say is this." Her voice had become very human, even tender; it took away from the offense of her words. "If anything did happen—Dicky says there isn't any one belonging to you except Lady Collop—I think it was Collop—it's a name and a half—and he says she's an old cat—well, if anything does go wrong I want you to let me have the children."

A thin hand went to the panting throat; to speak was impossible.

"I'd do everything for them. I'd marry him then. I'd bring them up just as you'd like—so would he; I'd make him, I'd take care of that. And I'd love them, I'd love them as if they were my own—and I'll never have any—know that—never can—it had to be. I'm making heaps and I'd settle it on them; week by week I'd put it into a lawyer's hands. They shouldn't go on the stage, or do what I'm doing. They should be brought up lady and gentleman. They should go to college, go abroad. I'd do everything for them. Don't you see they've Dick's life in them, the best of it, the part you had? I've only got the dregs of him now. I've only had dregs all my life; money and all is only dregs when it comes in the way it does to me."

"I want you to go away," Linda said, in so quiet a voice that it almost startled the other. "They are my children—mine, not his any longer; they're mine—and in that way he is mine still. The rest is yours. I'm glad I've seen you, that you didn't know, that you've explained him to me. I didn't see it before—I mean, that anything but what he did was impossible to him. Somehow—I don't want to say this with any arrogance—but he, and you, and all the things with which you are concerned belong to some other world than the one I have entered lately."

"But if anything happened—we never know—" She stopped, fearing to show what she had seen written on Linda's face.

"I will keep them—living or dead—I will never give them up."

"Well—" It was the woman who staggered back this time, for Linda's tone made her feel that it was true, as she said, they stood in different worlds, they were speaking across the distance between.

"I want you to go away. Marry him if you can, make him better, but go! I want you to go! If there's any reparation you wish to make me, let it take the form of vanishing completely from me and mine."

"Well," said the woman again in a lower tone, "I'm sorry. I thought per-

haps you'd see it. I meant to do what I could."

"Yes, I see it," Linda said. "You are better than I thought. But go—go!"

"Just say that you forgive me?"

"Oh, yes, I forgive you. But I want you to go. I entreat you to go."

The woman turned away disappointedly. "I will; but look here, perhaps we're both wound up a bit now. If you think better of it I will do all I've said, I'll do everything I can." The tears came into her eyes.

"Thank you," Linda said, and once more she repeated, this time very gently: "But I want you to go."

The woman went forward a step.

"No—no!" The white face was distorted with agony, the eyes were aflame. "I couldn't bear you to touch me—if you dare—"

"Well," the woman said once more, almost in fright, "all right—I'm off."

She put on the motor coat, gathered up the veil, and without another word—as if dazed—went down the stairs; they creaked as she went over them. The chauffeur outside set the engine going.

Linda went out to a landing from which she could see the road; the motor was already outside the farm gate. In a moment it had vanished.

Looking downward, she saw the farmer's wife.

"Do you know if the children are awake?" she asked.

"They've gone out with Bessie to see the cows milked. It's time they were in," the farmer's wife answered.

She went back to the room and opened the mullion window—wider still, as if to change the atmosphere; then sat down on the basket chair that had many cushions, and, leaning her arms on the deep ledge, watched—panting, breathless, only half alive—watched. The scent of flowers, of stocks and early roses came up to her; the honeysuckle was too far away.

"Oh, to live—to live! I will! I will!"

Five minutes passed—ten minutes. Now and again a bird chirped a soft



good-by to the spring day that was nearly over; but she heard nothing, saw nothing, her face was hidden—she was praying still the same words: "Let me live! Let me live!"

Then through the distance, behind the hedge, on their way from the out-buildings, beyond the copse, she heard the sound of singing. They were coming, they had seen the cows milked. A little pause, as if they had halted; then Bessie softly went on with her song:

Wha'll buy m' caller herrin'?

They're bonnie fish and halesome farein'.

Wha'll buy m' caller herrin'?

They're new drawn fra' the Firth.

The beating of a child's drum—with a first sense of time, it was wonderful to hear it—and they came in sight; the red-haired Scotch girl carrying the baby, a little fair-haired boy of three and a half walking close to her skirt, a toy drum slung round his shoulder and a stick in either hand. The sunlight fell on them as they came through the gate.

"Oh, to live—to live!" moaned the watcher at the window. "Oh, God, give me any agony, any misery you will, but don't take me away from them!"

She reached out her hands again, and grew calm, as if she knew that some presence hovering near had heard.

Four o'clock on Thursday. Tea was laid in the sitting room at Highbrook Farm; thick cream of the Devonshire sort, and a cake that the farmer's wife had made.

Linda, thinner if possible even in the last few days, her breathing more difficult, was resting on the sofa, saving herself up for the exertion of entertaining her visitor. The children would come in at a quarter to five—the baby in a white dress, the little boy in his green sweater and the soft cap that made him look like an elf born in the woods.

But the time passed, and no Miss Fingall appeared. At twenty minutes to five there entered a fussy gentleman, who had evidently tried hard to cultivate a professional manner. He car-

ried a square deal box, nailed up; it had not been opened since it came from the stores. He explained that he was the local doctor; that an hour ago Miss Fingall had ordered the fly, to drive to the farm; going downstairs she had fallen, sprained her ankle badly, and was hurt in various ways. She would be in bed some days. On recovering a little from the shock, greatly dismayed at not being able to pay her visit, she had sent him, in the fly, to explain, and had asked him to bring this box of toys; she had sent up to London for it.

"Oh, how kind of her! Why, she has never even seen the children. But I felt how kind she was the other day. I will go and see her."

"Not yet; perhaps in a couple of days." The doctor was anxious to make the most of the patient from London who had taken the best rooms at the hotel.

All night Miss Fingall moved her aching head about on the lavender-scented pillows; and if sleep came at all she dreamed of Highbrook Farm and two children who looked at her, shy and hesitating. Once, half awake, she called to them; the chambermaid heard her and told the doctor, who insisted on sending for a nurse from Amersham. It was quite a case for him; he wondered if it would be important enough for a consultation.

A few days later Linda Bowton came; she had walked, and the drawn look on her face showed how great had been the exertion. She almost sank into the chair by the bed; she could hardly speak.

"Oh, you shouldn't have come."

Miss Fingall was distressed.

"I wanted to—I longed to—I couldn't stay away." The last words were almost whispered.

"It was too far for you to walk."

"I rested before I came up. Oh, I left the bluebells downstairs!"

"The bluebells?"

"They gathered them—the children and nurse. Baby picked some with her own hands. They sent them to you for

the toys. How kind it was of you to think of them!"

"I was so glad I did," Miss Fingall answered; her usually dull eyes were full of tenderness, her pains seemed to have fled. "I wish I had seen them the other day."

She pulled at the bellrope beside her. A servant appeared—the nurse had gone out.

"I want you to bring up the bluebells that are downstairs, and some tea, and to order the fly to take this lady to Highbrook Farm presently, when she wants to go. You will stay an hour?" she pleaded to her visitor.

"An hour—not longer."

She waited till the servant had left the room, then leaned forward and kissed the thin hands folded outside on the sheet. "How kind of you to think of the fly! How dear you are altogether!"

The tears gathered in Miss Fingall's eyes. "You mustn't do that; no one ever did it to me," she said; "no one at all."

Linda raised her head and looked at her—at the long, almost sad face with deep lines on it and the weak mouth with the corners that drooped so easily—it was trembling with emotion.

"I wish I knew about you," she said; "you are not strange to me; and you are so lonely, I can feel that you are. Have you no belongings, who love you and take care of you?"

"No one at all does that," Miss Fingall answered feebly. "People don't care for me at all. I wish they did; it must be so"—she hesitated; the dark eyes bending over her suggested the next word; it wasn't one that she herself often used—"it must be so beautiful," she added. "You see, I'm not clever. I'm not anything. I think I should be different if I saw you sometimes; you are not like any one I know. It is just as if——" She stopped for a moment and shut her eyes; it was all so strange, as if she were drawing in the life that the fragile casement before her was not strong enough to hold together; it seemed to be escaping, to quicken the whole atmosphere.

"You shall see me sometimes if you care to," Linda said; "and the children—they shall love you."

The words sank deep in her listener's heart.

"Tell me what they look like. I'm afraid I shan't see them now—till I'm better."

The girl leaned her elbows on the bed and looked into space, as if she saw green fields; Miss Fingall thought that it was like music to listen to her. She took in every syllable, heard every whisper of the low voice, ached at every difficult respiration. It was the keenest hour of the dull spinster's life.

"Do you know what they are like now?" Linda asked presently, looking down at the half-closed eyes.

"Yes, I know. I can see them—quite plainly. Perhaps you would tell me about——" She hesitated, but the words forced themselves out. "About their father—if it doesn't hurt. I mean only what he was like, too?"

"He was born in the summer; he seemed to belong to it, to be the sport of its winds, irresponsible, and full of charm. He cared for nothing long. I was only a day in his summer—that was all. He went away, but he used to come back, just as the sunshine does, and stay a little—only a little while, as it did. But the summer is soon over." She stopped for a minute. "Before the second baby was born he had gone altogether. I heard afterward there was some one else. But he left her, too—he went on. I saw that woman only a few days ago."

"Oh, it's dreadful," Miss Fingall said feebly.

"I don't think he can help it." Linda coughed and struggled for breath; but her listener was dumb. She went on suddenly: "Lately I have seen the soul of him. We never understand the control that body and soul have over each other; something, for which he was not to be blamed, seemed to move him, as a tree is blown by the wind. He was not strong enough to resist. It's all so tangled and queer. The master of the soul—whatever it is that masters it—isn't as strong, sometimes, as the mas-

ter of the body. Have you ever thought about it?"

"No, I never did." Miss Fingall was mystified, a little frightened. "I will," she added, in a half whisper, "I will now, but I don't think I shall understand. You have the children," she added.

A cry came from Linda's lips. "Yes, and they love me, and I them—just as once I did him." She shut her eyes for a moment. "Oh, to be strong! I am—but my soul is stronger than the body that holds it, and I dread lest the outward me should drop away, down into the earth again. But life itself cannot—surely life cannot? If we could only know what life is?" She looked up again, at the woman lying before her; then, as if with an effort, brought herself back to an earlier part of their speech. "His best life is in the children," she said, with a smile that transfigured her, "and they shall be strong of soul and sweet of heart—his heart and his life. And they are mine; he gave them to me." She leaned her face down on Miss Fingall's hands again. "I love them so," she whispered.

It was almost more than the lone woman could bear. "I can feel it. I love them, too, just as if I'd seen them already," she said.

Linda raised her head and looked at her again; a strange peace that was almost happiness found its way to the dark eyes. Her manner changed, her mood seemed to drop from her.

The door opened.

"Why, here is tea. Shall I pour it out—may I?" she asked, with a little wheezy laugh.

Miss Fingall started as if released from a spell. "I never knew any one like you," she said, half to herself, "yet I seem to have known you always. I can't think why it is—it is very strange," she repeated, in her old silly voice.

Linda poured out the tea, put a pillow beneath Miss Fingall's shoulders, and raised her tenderly. There was a thrill in every touch of her hand.

"Tell me more about the children,"

Miss Fingall said, "and about things you've done." It seemed as if she had to know—as a book held before us has to be read.

Then Linda told her stories of the children and of places she had seen.

"You ought to go away—but a sprain is a long business; it won't be possible just yet."

"I shouldn't know where to go," Miss Fingall answered. "Tell me about somewhere that is easy to get to."

"You might go to Avranches in Normandy," her visitor said, after a pause. "It's a little place—I love it very much. There are such straight roads to drive along—long white roads, with trees on either side; perhaps they're spoiled by motors now—I don't know. At Avranches you must stay at the little hotel with the green shutters to its windows. I forget its name, but it has a rose garden and is very peaceful. In one of the churches there is a tomb with a wax effigy in a glass case—of a girl. She has dark hair and thin cheeks like mine." She touched her own. "She is dressed in satin; it's so tragic and grotesque and queer. I wonder if she is young still—the poor wax effigy lying there is young. Why should she, for whom time is at an end, grow old?" She stopped a moment, and then: "You can drive on to Mont St. Michael." Her tone had changed. "It's a wonderful place. We had a high room looking out on the sea—we sat up late looking out at it—but in the morning the tide had gone and only the sands were left. Over the sands a religious procession, white-gowned and red-robed, was coming, with a golden cross held high in front of it; the sunshine fell on the sand, on the red and white and the golden cross—the gold of the sun."

"I can see it all." Miss Fingall's eyelids drooped, her soul seemed to have gone outward over the sand; she could hear the voices chanting, she could see the sunshine, feel it—soft and warm.

"You must get some sleep," Linda whispered. "The fly drove up to the door a minute ago. But I shall come again. When you are well you will

see the children, and they will love you."

Three days later. Miss Fingall was very ill. Something clutched at her throat; a cold hand seemed to be laid on her heart, but she lay quite passive, she didn't mind illness any more—was it because of the great curiosity that beset her, the longing to see beyond that gorse-covered common, to speed along the dusty road with the hanging wood high up on the right-hand side? How strange she remembered that other road—the long one from Av-ranches, with the pointed trees on either side; she thought of the church and the waxen effigy, of the girl lying dead in the finery that her closed eyes would never open again to see. The carriage stopped beside the sea, from which rose a mountain made by the hands of men—not a mountain at all, but houses, a palace, a fortress—she remembered it now; once she had seen a picture at a railway station, a colored print of Mont St. Michael and the abbey that crowns it; she had longed to go there, to walk round its ramparts and climb the steep stairs to the unused rooms—the rooms of centuries ago.

It was just as well to go in imagination—she saw it as plainly as if she had been there, as if she remembered. The tide went out—and out—and out, but there were no sands, only green fields; by her side she heard a voice say: "They will love you." But she couldn't move, she couldn't breathe; a tight band was round her head, a weight was on her chest, her limbs were rigid. Oh, she was dying, she was dying; something—a stone was at her lips—a stone—an icy hand was raising her—oh, she was mad! It was only the nurse putting a cup of milk to her lips—the nurse's arm behind her; she had been dreaming—she had really hurt her head a good deal in that fall; she was glad of the strong arm to rest against.

"You're much better. You are through the worst."

She looked up and wondered where she was; of course, at the White Hart.

"Have I been very ill?"

"Very ill, but you are better. Shut your eyes and sleep again."

Miss Fingall smiled and did as she was told—a long and blessed sleep it seemed—she awoke, but made no sign; she was glad to lie still; it was weakness, probably. When she tried to think, it was such an effort to realize the things that had been in her life before these days of illness; and across her brain strange fancies went, of places she had never seen, of things she had never known.

Three days more. She was much better. They moved her nearer to the open window, the sunshine filled the room, she saw the roadway beneath.

"I shall see anything that comes by," she said to the nurse, and smiled softly to herself.

"You'll see that poor lady's funeral come by directly," the nurse answered.

"The poor lady?"

"The lady at the farm. She died the night you were so ill."

"Where are the children?"

"Some one took them away yesterday."

"I shall never see them." The words came to her lips mechanically; her brain was confused still. She shut her eyes.

The sound of footsteps, of wheels turning slowly. A little procession—one carriage and a few stragglers behind an open hearse; on the coffin a heap of bluebells.

"The children gathered them with their own hands—the little boy and the baby—the nurse made her pick some, too," her nurse told her.

A strange, half-silly smile came over Miss Fingall's face; she knew it to be there, but could not control it.

"Perhaps she isn't dead, after all," she said, "there may be only a wax effigy in the coffin—no one knows."

She lay back and closed her eyes and smiled.

"You've had a bad pull down," the doctor said. "You ought to go to the sea presently, and in the winter to a warmer climate." He knew it was the thing to order patients abroad.

She felt curious as she drove to Montagu Place from the station; she wanted to see the house again. It looked different from her memory of it—cheerless and ugly.

"It wants more color, more air," she thought, and consulted the lawyer's wife about it.

"The tumble on her head has done her good," that lady told her husband, "she's more intelligent; but there's a strange, dazed look in her eyes, as if she were gradually awakening from a long sleep; and she doesn't seem to remember much about Leesbury."

At the end of the summer Miss Fingall obediently took herself to Margate—the doctor had said it was the air she wanted—to one of the quietest hotels at the far end by Cliftonville; she took long walks inland, and lingered, looking at the hop poles; there was a windmill, too; she had never seen how picturesque a windmill was till now.

"The world is more beautiful than it used to be," she said to herself one morning, "the things in it seem to have more meaning. But I feel as if I were waiting for something; as if, hidden away, there were people I loved. If I could only know who they are, or where they live!"

But this idea, which seemed to have floated into her mind from without, went vaguely on again and was forgotten.

One day two people had motored over from Ramsgate to lunch—a plump, fair woman, and a man who looked bored and let his eyes wander round aimlessly. Miss Fingall found herself watching them, wondering about them, a little afraid of the man, attracted and repelled. She passed them when she had finished; at the doorway some one stopped her. It was the man. She was almost frightened.

"You left this bag behind; I saw it on your table," he said.

As he gave it to her his hand touched hers; it sent a thrill through her. She hardly thanked him, and went on.

"A nervous creature," he said to his companion, "Think I've seen her somewhere."

"Isn't an old love, is she, Dicky?" the woman said jeeringly. "Doesn't look your sort, does she?"

"Something attractive about her," he answered. "Don't know what. Awfully pretty girl over there with the green hat."

The woman rose quickly. "Hope it won't be quite so beastly dusty going back. Let's be off."

"Wish you'd learn to speak properly," he said impatiently.

The girl in the green hat gave him a little smile.

"An hour or two with her would pick me up," he thought, as he followed his companion out.

Miss Fingall was in the hall; she watched him go through it.

"Queer woman," he said to himself, and took his place beside the fair woman in the motor.

"What are we going to do to-night?" he asked. But he was thinking of Avonranches, of the rose garden at the hotel, of the walk to the church, and the wax effigy of a girl who lay with closed eyes upturned to the light. He shuddered, and hated the woman beside him now.

Miss Fingall felt like a waif at Mentone. She hid herself away from the fashionable world in a little hotel near the station; "St. Petersburg," it was called. No English stayed there, but there were Poles, and Russians, and Hungarians; all manner of strange tongues were heard at the little tables in the *salle à manger*. She liked hearing them; they made her think of countries far away, though she had never seen them. She remembered a wonderful sentence she had read, she didn't know who had written it—it was Madame Novikoff's—that ended: "But the Slavs stand on the threshold of the morning."

She looked round at the people; they were Slavs. Did they know or did they think that endless night was with them, as perhaps she had thought it was with her when she lay at Leesbury with the pain gripping her heart and throat? She was always afraid to re-

member that night; she did not dare to think of Linda, or the children; she was not strong enough yet.

She went out one night, by the door that led to the end of the public garden, swiftly on to the sea.

"I stand on the threshold, too; on the threshold—on the threshold," her heart cried out to her.

She sat down on one of the empty chairs against the green hedge that bordered the road on the landward side, and looked across at the sea, veiled and mysterious as the future, and beautiful, oh, dear Heaven, how beautiful it was! But everything had beauty or mystery in it now; and so many messages came to her; she was conscious of them, yet could not divine their meaning; it was as if they were given to some other self sheltered by her humanity, and she but just caught a whisper of these.

A Polish girl had been playing in the little salon; she rose and went to the fire. Almost without knowing it, Miss Fingall looked at her music, then apologized.

"Oh, but do," the girl said, "and try anything you like over."

"I should be afraid before you."

"I'm going out for a little while. Do, while I'm gone."

Miss Fingall looked at the music again. There was a Polonaise of Chopin's, the one she had seen on the music stand at Highbrook Farm.

"It's so difficult," she thought breathlessly.

But no—but no—it all became plain to her as she looked. She put her fingers on the keys; they found the notes. It was wonderful—it was wonderful—she had never dreamed of this.

And there were listeners, smiling to her, helping her, reaching out, touching her softly with hands she could not see—but she knew them, loved them. Oh, it was beautiful; this was the world of sound—the meeting of the worlds that had been, and were, and would be in the years to come.

In the spring she went back to Wa-

vercombe; but she felt that she couldn't live at the cottage if the rooms remained empty. She felt as if they cried out to her. She knew that they were waiting—but for whom?

The first evening of all, just as if she had been bidden, she went out—along the road till she came to the high wall with the stone coping on the top.

Then from behind the wall came the sound of children's voices. She rose to her feet.

"They're here!" she cried. "They're here—they're here!"

She stood transfixed, she listened breathlessly, her heart beating quickly, till the sounds went farther and farther away, till all was still; but the joy of them remained with her. She went back to the cottage and lay awake thinking the whole night long. She saw the dawn rise, the misty trees, that had been waiting for it, grow distinct.

In the morning Lady Collop, driving by, was surprised to see Miss Fingall fly out to her.

"Oh, do come in! I have something to say, to ask you."

"My dear Miss Fingall"—Lady Collop sat down puffingly on the sofa—"how good you were to poor Linda Bowton! So touching of you to send toys to the children!"

"But I never saw them." She was still breathless. "I was going to them when I fell."

"Most unfortunate. I hope you feel no after effects?"

"No, I'm better; it has done me worlds of good," she laughed.

Lady Collop wondered at the different expression on her face. "You probably know that the children are with me; there was no one else to take them."

"You must love them so." A little thrill was in her voice.

"How foolish people were about children," Lady Collop thought. "Well, to tell the truth," she said, "I find it a great incumbrance. Starting a nursery, too, at this time of day—the girls naturally object, and Sir John, who is gouty—"

Miss Fingall sprang forward. Her eyes were shining, her voice was eager.



"Give them to me!" she cried.

"Give them to you?"

"I have no one on earth belonging to me. I've been waiting—hoping—longing—this is it! Their mother only saw me twice, but I think she would trust me. Oh, let me have them! Let them be my children!"

"But really, dear Miss Fingall, isn't this a wild impulse?"

"It's no impulse. I have been waiting for them—looking for them—longing for them. I know it now. Oh, won't you tell me—won't you do it?"

"I could do nothing without my husband's consent."

"Then ask him. Tell him all I say, that there is nothing in the world I will not do for them."

"It would be a great thing for the children, and no doubt would be a comfort to you."

"When can I know? I can't—can't wait!" Miss Fingall clasped her hands over her heart.

"Come this afternoon—you shall have an answer."

Lady Collop went away, devoutly hoping the dull spinster's head had not come by madness.

Oh, the long hours of that day! But every one of them was filled with life to the brim and charged with promise.

She could scarcely drag her steps along, beside the wall, past the seat on which she had sat the night before, in at the gate, to the much-bedecked drawing room.

For a moment she was alone. There were open French windows, and beyond the trimly kept lawn, the trees, and the blue of the sky.

Sir John and Lady Collop entered together.

"My wife has told me of your very remarkable offer. On thinking it over, are you quite sure?"

She looked up at the slow, heavy couple.

"I want them—I want them. I would love them—love them so, if you'll let me have them."

"My dear lady, it would be impossible to refuse such an offer. It is a so-

lution of a great difficulty for us. I understand you will provide for them?"

"Provide for them!" she cried.

"They shall have everything I possess. When may I have them? Now? May I have them now?"

"I'm afraid not to-night, but to-morrow they could come to you with all their little packages. Would you like to see them?"

"May I? May I?" Her heart stood still.

"They went to see the cows milked," Lady Collop said, "they will be here in a few minutes."

"Let me go and meet them." A dazed look came to her eyes. "Tell me the way."

"We'll take you."

They stepped out with her on to the lawn.

She stopped suddenly. "Let me go alone," she entreated. "You're very—very kind, but it's more than I can bear, this happiness. Tell me the way."

They looked at her and in some sense understood.

"Go to the end of the garden, through a gate by the lilac bushes; you'll see some trees and a field; they will come across it from the cowshed."

She hurried away like a dream woman. She saw them when she came to the trees; they were nearly across the field. She drew back and watched them—the red-haired Scotch nurse, a baby girl toddling by her, on the other side a little boy in a shabby green sweater that looked too small for him; his little soft cap was pushed back—she could see his eyes and the gold of his hair. The sunshine fell on them, the nurse lifted the baby in her arms and began to sing, very softly:

Wha'll buy m' caller herrin'?

They're Lonnie fish and halesome farein'.

Wha'll buy m' caller herrin'?

They're new drawn fra' the Firth.

Then all things fell away. She was by the mullion window, her arms reached over the ledge, she heard the sound of a little drum. For one moment—for just one moment and never again—she understood.



**T**HEY were returning from Glasgow's camp in the Adirondacks—a party of fifteen—in Glasgow's private car.

Glasgow was third vice president of the D. N. & O., an altruistic soul whom millions and elevation had not been able to subdue. The overhelpfulness of the general passenger agent still clung to him like a taint.

Casting about for fresh fields of benevolence, he had noted in an evil hour the estrangement between Mr. and Mrs. Worden Wills, and instantly burned to effect their reconciliation.

"Why," he questioned exuberantly, "should that sweet, young thing have flung herself off to Reno and gotten a divorce, when everybody knows her marriage was almost ideal and Worden the soul of devotion? A mere lovers' tiff, of course, a trivial misunderstanding of some sort; and those two misguided children, I'll warrant, are now breaking their hearts over it, only restrained by pride from rushing into one another's arms.

"What is needed," said Glasgow, "is an opportunity for them to see something of each other; that, and the good offices of a mutual friend. Yes," unctuously rubbing his hands together, "I think I can be of service."

Having thus organized himself into a chapter of the "Helping Hand Society," Glasgow rested not until he had dragged Worden away from his beloved "coppers"—Mr. Wills was a deputy commissioner of police—and Cynthia from her fortune hunters and frivolities, and

had set them down in his Forest of Arden up in the North Woods.

There were trees in the Forest of Arden on which to hang sighing verses; there were secluded dells made as though to order for romantic trysts; there were even leggings and canvas shooting coats—the modern equivalent of doublet and hose—if, indeed, Cynthia had desired to play Shakespeare's delectable maid.

The cast, too, was all there—a company of lovers carefully culled by Glasgow to shed amatory contagion. One could pick out *Touchstone* and *Audrey*, *Silvius* and his *Phoebe*, *Oliver* and *Celia*, while Mrs. McIntosh, most dormouse-y of chaperons, was sufficiently innocuous to be the *Banished Duke*.

The one part of melancholy *Jacques* was not apparently filled. Destiny had slyly reserved that for Glasgow himself; for to his dismay Worden and Cynthia obstinately refused to fit into the scheme arranged for them.

Did they soften under his diplomatic promptings, or seek the stolen interviews he so painstakingly contrived for them? Not by a jugful. On the contrary, no refractory pair of mules ever balked harder at being forced into double harness.

They seemed to scent Glasgow's well-intentioned purpose from the very moment of their arrival, and as by common consent set themselves to thwart it.

"The old fool!" Worden ungratefully apostrophized his host. "If there's any reconciling to be done, Cynthia and

I can manage it ourselves without any of his bally interference."

And thereafter he spent most of the time during his stay close to the long-distance telephone, receiving reports from his office, and directing the affairs of the department almost as actively as though he were in town. "Diamond Sammy" Cook, an elusive crook popularly known as the "Ice Man," was just then levying heavy tribute along Fifth Avenue, and Worden was consumed with an ambition to effect his capture.

Cynthia, on the other hand, found occupation like a naughty child in pulling to pieces Glasgow's artistic ensemble. With malicious zest, she ramped through the parterre of sweethearts provided to furnish "atmosphere," plucking plighted swains in a heedless riot of flirtation, until she had reduced *Audrey*, *Celia*, et al. to weeping, and the camp echoed constantly with the sounds of jealous recrimination.

It was a case either for calling out the militia or supplying her with legitimate prey; and in sheer desperation, Glasgow summoned Sumner Cox, the somewhat mysterious Westerner who had followed Cynthia on from Reno, and for whom she had greased the ways into society.

But confusion worse confounded followed the strategic move. Either through Cynthia's manœuvring, or on their own initiative and in a spirit of retaliation, the daughters of woe perked up and encompassed the new arrival with the incense of worship. By the end of the week, all the men, not excluding Worden, were storming furiously at Glasgow, demanding to know why the—why he had afflicted a congenial house party with that cad, that insufferable bouncer, that slouch-hatted patent-medicine faker of a Sumner Cox?

No; it had not been a happy fortnight for the third vice president. Lines of care were graven deep in his chubby face, and he jumped as nervously as a cat if one so much as spoke to him.

However, it was all over now, and

as the New York express with his car attached swung down through the forested hills, past peaceful, little lakes and foaming, turbulent trout streams in the soft Northern twilight, Glasgow relaxed and almost beamed again at the prospect of speedy deliverance from his contentious guests.

Not another evening would he have risked at the camp with such chances for an imminent explosion; and accordingly they were making the trip at night, with dinner served on the car shortly after they started. True, he could not fail to be conscious of the electricity still lurking in the atmosphere, but he thought he saw signs of clearing, and optimistically hoped for a fair passage. Superficially at least, conditions for the moment were serene, with everybody avoiding points of contact, and carefully insulating the lines of conversation.

In this wise, they fell to talking about the vagaries displayed by people on board sleeping cars, and Shiela Dahlgren, a tall, dark-haired girl, suddenly spoke up.

"Well," she said, "I must confess to a little crotchet of the kind myself. I know it is freakish, and I have been warned against it a hundred times; but I simply cannot sleep a wink either on a train or anywhere else, unless I first deck myself out in every piece of jewelry I possess. It's been so ever since I was a little girl and used to cry when my nurse tried to take away my pretty things at bedtime."

Her voice, high and clear, rose above the roar and rumble of the wheels, and a little uneasy thrill ran around the table; for Shiela had unusually handsome gems, and the waiters could scarcely have failed to overhear.

Then they smiled at their momentary misgivings. This was the vice president's car, its employees chosen from among the company's most trusted men. In it, one was as safe, of course, as in a burglar-proof vault.

Their attention was diverted, too, at the instant by the nimbleness of one of the waiters. Bringing a couple of plates of soup to the table, he upset one

through a sudden lurch of the train, just over Glasgow's bald head; but quick as a wink he shot the other underneath and safely caught every drop of the threatened deluge. Everybody laughed naturally, and the fellow was given a ringing round of applause.

They all laughed and forgot Shiela's indiscreet revelation—all, save Worden Wills. With face grown suddenly grave, he darted a quick, searching glance down the table to where Sumner Cox sat on the girl's right hand.

Thereafter, too, Worden was preoccupied and thoughtful; and presently, when dinner was over, he lounged out to the observation platform, where he sat for an hour or more smoking and pondering, heedless of the scenery as it flitted by.

Returning to the car at length, he sought Shiela with an evident purpose in view, but only to be informed that she had pleaded a headache and already retired.

"To tell you the real trouble," Mabel Stevens eagerly whispered to him, "she has broken at last with Allen Varney. You know they have been on the verge of it ever since Sumner Cox joined us at the camp; Allen is so frightfully jealous in that crazy, Southern way of his. Perhaps you didn't notice, but he was watching the two of them all through dinner to-night as black as a thundercloud."

Worden shook his head. His scrutiny, although he didn't explain so to her, had been engaged in another direction.

"Well, he was," Mabel ran on; "and immediately afterward, he drew Shiela off to the end of the car away from us all, and began pitching into her. Of course, I don't know what was said; but pretty soon I saw Shiela's head go up in an indignant way, and she fairly tore his ring from her finger. Then she called the porter, and flung off to bed without even saying good night to Mr. Glasgow."

"Humph!" was Worden's only comment; but there was a quality of genuine sympathy in the glance he cast along the car to where Varney was sitting

alone. The young Georgian's face, always pale against his black, black hair, looked almost ghastly now, and he had deep circles underneath his eyes. While Worden gazed, he summoned the porter, evidently not for the first time, and tossed off a stiff glass of straight brandy as if it were so much water.

The deputy commissioner sauntered over to him carelessly, and laid a hand on his shoulder.

"The ladies are all going to bed, Varney," he suggested. "What say to a little game in the smoking compartment? Bancroft is sure to sit in, and that wretched Dunlevy and Cox will make——"

"Cox!" The boy ripped out an oath. "I want you to understand, Wills, I don't play cards with that sort of cattle!"

Worden bent down close to his ear. "You will to-night, though, Varney," he urged under his breath. "I am satisfied the fellow is doing some funny work with the discard, and I want your aid in showing him up. That full-house draw of his on Thursday night was too good to be true."

The other laughed thickly; he was drunker than Worden had thought.

"Every man to his trade," he sneered offensively; "and yours, I believe, is to catch crooks. All right, if you like it; but I don't dirty my hands in that way. Join me in a drink, commissioner? No? Well, I guess I'll take just one more, and then turn in. Hey, porter, bring me another brandy, will you?"

He lurched off a trifle unsteadily to his berth, and Worden after a moment's hesitation repaired to the smoker to put up his proposition of a game to the little group of men yawning there into one another's faces. Despite his assertion to Varney, Mr. Wills did not really suspect Cox of manipulating the cards, it should be explained, although perhaps not deeming him above it; but he did have very pronounced doubts of the Westerner in another way, and he was determined not to let the fellow from under his eye. A session of poker, sure to last, once started, until morning and Spuyten Duyvil hove into view, offered

him, he believed, the best means of securing this aim.

But the lure of the jack pot failed to exercise its accustomed spell. Most of the men felt that vacation was over, and that it behooved them to take a good night's rest and prepare for tomorrow's return to business. A grumpy, tired, intractable lot, they responded to Worden's overtures only with frigid silence or peevish profanity.

Cox, it is true, with a somewhat enigmatic smile agreed to take a hand, and the inveterate Bancroft admitted a willingness to be coaxed; but the refusal of the rest was uncompromising, and three-handed play, whatever else it may be, is certainly not poker.

Bancroft hastily recanted at the prospect; and since he could scarcely expect to hold the Westerner to a night-long duel of "cutthroat," there was nothing left for Worden but to forego his project, and follow the straggling line bent pajamaward.

On lying down, however, he removed only his coat and shoes, and placed his revolver—a harmless thirty-two with safety attachment—close to his hand. Then having arranged a peephole in the berth curtains through which he could command a view of the entire car, he took up vigil.

The night dragged slowly on; Worden had looked at his watch in the belief that dawn must be at hand fully a dozen times before the lapse of the first hour. The only sound beside the roar of the train was a gentle snoring from up the car; the only thing to greet his eyes the rhythmic swaying of the curtains in the dim half light. Worden was not one of those who find it difficult to sleep on a railway journey, and he had to fight hard against the somnolent contagion.

On and on they rolled for seemingly endless aeons; but at last Albany was reached, and beginning to feel with the ride down the Hudson almost as though he were once more under the sheltering arm of the Metropolitan force, Worden relaxed the tension for a moment, and rested his weary eyes.

When he opened them again with a start the gray morning light was com-

encing to filter in around the edges of the drawn blind at the window. He must have been asleep for at least two hours.

Moreover, there was a confused impression in his mind—whether from a dream or in reality—that during the time a stifled cry for help had reached his ears.

He stayed not to argue the thing out; but even as he roused up, was out of his berth and standing in the aisle. He took one step forward; then drew back his stockinged foot with a sharp indrawing of his breath. It had pressed into something wet, which as he glanced quickly down revealed itself a dark, spreading stain on the carpet extending from under the front of Miss Dahlgren's berth across the way.

Instinctively he tore back her curtains; then recoiled with a shuddering gasp of horror from what he saw.

She lay there as in a shambles, a heavy hunting knife driven to her heart. No more than a glance was required to see that she was dead.

For a moment, Worden stared transfixed—too overcome and unnerved by the spectacle to do more than gaze. Then the orderly instincts of the police executive came to his aid. There must be no scene, or disturbance of any kind. The women of the party must be kept in ignorance of the tragedy until after their arrival in New York. Indeed, no one must know for the present except those whose assistance was necessary; so more surely would the apprehension of the murderer be effected.

Quickly he drew the curtains again; then tiptoeing down the aisle, awakened Glasgow and broke the news to him as collected as possible. Bancroft and Dunlevy, whom he felt that he could trust, he also roused up, and sent one scurrying for the train conductor, the other to rout out the porter and have the telltale stains removed from the floor.

"But who could have done it?" Glasgow, shocked and shaken, muttered tremulously for the twentieth time when they stood a little group once more beside berth number seven a few minutes later. A physician, whom the con-

ductor had found on board and brought with him, had just completed his examination and reported that although death was practically instantaneous, the blow had probably been struck in the course of a struggle.

"Who could have done it?" repeated Glasgow. "And what possible motive could there have been?"

Worden pointed significantly to the girl's silk negligee devoid of any ornament, and to her ringless hands.

"You remember what she said last night about always wearing her jewels to bed."

"Ah? Robbery, eh?" The conductor glanced up sharply. "Where's that porter?"

"The porter? I can't find him anywhere." Dunlevy, returning from an unavailing search, was just in time to give answer.

"Can't find him?" The conductor's eyes narrowed, and he took a hasty step toward the rear of the car.

But as he turned, the others half starting to follow, there came a thrilling interruption. From a berth on the other side of the aisle was suddenly thrust the white face of young Varney, his black hair ruffled and awry. He stared beyond them a moment, his eyes slowly widening with horror; then with a choking cry sprang from his couch, burst past them, and flung himself down beside the dead girl in a transport of hysterical weeping.

"Oh, why did I do it? Why did I do it?" His voice rose almost to a shriek, as he clasped the inert form in his arms, and showered kisses on the cold, cold lips. "I was mad, sweetheart, crazy with jealousy!"

The entire car awoke at his frenzied outcry, and a dozen heads popped out from between the curtains, excitedly demanding to know what was the matter.

Completely taken aback, the group of men in the aisle could only gape dumbly at the fire of questions; and in another instant, had it not been for Sumner Cox, there would have been a scene beggaring description.

How he got there so quickly, or was able to size up affairs with such swift

intuition, none of them could imagine; but he met the emergency with the precision of a man trained to judgment on the pull of a trigger.

With one sweep of his arm he drew the shielding curtains in front of number seven; then reaching in between them, he jerked Varney out, and throwing him across to the compartment recently vacated by Worden, muffled him with a pillow.

"It's nothing to get alarmed about, ladies," he drawled over his shoulder to the line of inquiring heads. "Varney here has been having a little touch of nightmare, but I guess it's all off now, like some coronet braids that I could mention."

There was a hasty withdrawal of the peering heads, and the men around him gave Cox a grudging glance of admiration. He had scant opportunity, however, to sun himself in their approval; for Varney was not submitting easily to the restraint imposed upon him, and all the Westerner's strength was required to hold him in check.

"Bear a hand here, some of you," he directed tersely. "We'll have to gag and tie this fellow, if he's to be kept quiet. I hate to do it, too," regretfully, "but I don't well see how we can help it. No telling what harm he mightn't do to himself, or somebody else, if he was loose. Poor chap's plumb locoed—and no wonder, either."

While he was talking, he had with the aid of Bancroft and the conductor deftly trussed up his struggling captive in the bedclothes; but, everything secure at last, he straightened up and faced the group with alert inquiry.

"Now, let's get down to business," he said brusquely. "Who's responsible for this job?"

Nobody answered, and Cox after a moment spoke again. "We all know who that knife belongs to, don't we?" indicating the blood-stained weapon which the conductor had taken into his possession.

Glasgow, Bancroft, Wills, and Dunlevy uneasily shifted their gaze. They all knew only too well to whom the knife belonged, and so did everybody



else who had been to the camp. It was one which Varney had frequently displayed, and it even had his initials cut deep into the handle.

Dunlevy was the first to pull himself together. "Don't go too fast there, Cox," he pleaded. "There's some mystery about the porter which should be straightened out, before we——"

"The porter?"

"Yes, I've looked for him everywhere, and can't——"

But he got no farther; for at that moment the conductor, who had been investigating the cause of a faint rapping sound which came off and on apparently from under the seats, gave a startled exclamation and reaching down, dragged to light the missing mulatto—although at first, indeed, his identity could only be surmised from his uniform, since he was tied hand and foot, and his head swathed in the folds of a heavy blanket.

Everybody started to question him at once, of course; but Cox, who to Worden's annoyance seemed rather taking charge of matters, entered an impatient protest.

"Give the man a chance there, can't you?" he remonstrated. "Let's see one of you try to sling conversation after breathing through a blanket for two or three hours. Come back in the smoking compartment, John," laying a hand on the porter's arm, "and take it easy. We ought to be getting pretty close to the straight of things, when we hear what you have to say."

But unfortunately the porter, even when sufficiently recovered from his ordeal to talk, could add but little to the sum of their information.

All he knew was that he had been awakened by a ring from number seven, and while hurrying to respond, had been waylaid in the aisle, the blanket thrown over his head, and before he could offer resistance, his hands and feet tied and helpless, he had then been shoved under the berth. Who his assailant had been he had not the slightest idea, and he was in equal ignorance as to what had happened afterward until the time of his release.

"Where were you when this attack was made on you, John?" probed the conductor.

"Jes' about by numbeh fo' sah."

"And who was in number four?" The conductor glanced at Glasgow, who answered hesitatingly:

"I think that was the berth occupied by Varney."

"Yes, sah, dat was hisn," corroborated the porter. "De gem'man wid de wite face w'at called fo' all dat brandy arter he had de quail wid de lady. Moresoever, dat blanket w'at was wrop' round my haid come off'n numbeh fo'."

A little stir pervaded the group at his words. Varney's passionate avowal might be set down to hysteria, the presence of his knife be susceptible of other explanation; but here was a link seeming to indicate his deliberate criminal intent. Bancroft and Dunlevy, glancing at one another, quickly looked away again; Glasgow gave a groan and sunk his head between his hands; and the doctor and conductor significantly arched their brows. Only Worden Wills resented the general inference.

"Nonsense!" he confuted sharply. "We are forgetting the robbery feature of this affair. Before you can formulate a theory, you must take all the facts into consideration."

"Ah, my dear Wills," bleated Glasgow, with an impressive shake of the head, "who can predicate the actions of a man crazed by drink and jealousy? I am loath as you to believe this awful thing of Varney, but——"

"You say there was a robbery?" Summer Cox broke in upon the vice president's platitudes. "What was taken?"

"Well, we only presume the robbery," Worden admitted stiffly. "However, you heard, no doubt, what Miss Dahlgren said last night about wearing her jewels in her sleep. She certainly had none on when I discovered the crime this morning."

"Ha!" Cox stood up and drew his hands from his pockets. "Come, there is a clue I had not thought of; why didn't you speak of it before? If those

jewels were taken, they must be still in the car, and a thorough search ought to demonstrate who has them."

The police commissioner faced him with a touch of challenge in his manner.

"Are you really proposing that we search the members of the party?" There was just a hint of emphasis to the "you."

Cox shrugged his shoulders. "Well, since one of the party is almost unquestionably the murderer," he drawled, "I don't think it would be a bad idea. Furthermore," a glint of defiance in his gray eye, "as I am rather a stranger to you all, I insist that I have first call."

Almost by compulsion, he led them to his own berth, and then stood aside while it and all his belongings were carefully gone over. The same process was followed for the others of the group, not even excepting Glasgow, and nothing found; but when they turned next to Varney's berth, a different result met their efforts.

The doctor and conductor, who as disinterested parties were intrusted with the search, had only to throw aside the pillow to disclose Miss Dahlgren's entire collection of jewels—rings, pins, watch, bracelets, necklaces, and amulets—done up in a handkerchief.

For a space no one spoke; then Dunlevy ejaculated shrilly:

"But he was insane! He had no idea what he was doing!"

"Didn't he?" Cox's face had grown very stern. "I have believed, too, that between drink and jealousy, he might have been off his head. But this," he waved his hand toward the glittering contents of the handkerchief, "looks like a pretty well-planned scheme to shift the blame on some one else.

"I think," glancing at the others, "before we let things go any farther, we'd better have him back and give the doctor here a chance to decide just how much of that raving of his is genuine."

No one could well object; and accordingly Varney, having been taken back to the smoking room, was released from his bonds and subjected to a rigorous interrogation. His violent emotion had

subsided to a great extent by this time, and he was quiet and apparently rational in manner, although still visibly shaken and distressed.

He answered dully the questions put to him, and seemed largely indifferent to his own predicament, but emphatically denied any guilty complicity in the terrible affair.

His impression, he said, on suddenly awaking and being confronted with the tragedy was that Miss Dahlgren had committed suicide on account of their quarrel the night before, and to this was due his wild self-accusation. Regarding the discovery of her gems under his pillow he could offer no explanation, and professed to be equally at a loss concerning the use of his knife and the attack upon the porter. He had slept heavily all night, he insisted, and had not heard a sound.

In the face of the damning facts against him, however, his denials carried little weight. Even before he had finished, the conductor had drawn Glasgow aside for a whispered consultation; and when the train pulled in at One Hundred and Twenty-fifth Street, a couple of plain-clothes men boarded it, and took Varney away in custody.

The arrest was managed so skillfully, though, that there was no phalanx of reporters on hand at Grand Central Station to annoy the party, nor did any of Glasgow's guests, except those already apprised, gain even an inkling of the facts until after they had left the car.

Worden himself told Cynthia very gently about the lamentable affair, as, in defiance of conventionalities, he accompanied her home from the station to her little apartment off the Park.

At first she was too stunned and overwhelmed to do more than stare incredulously; but presently, when she had recovered from the first shock of his news, she turned to him with a swift flash in her eyes.

"And do you really believe, Worden," she demanded, "that Allen Varney did this—this awful thing?"

He gazed at her a moment as though considering; then decisively shook his head.

"Why, then, have you allowed him to be arrested? You could have prevented it."

"Oh, that," he vouchsafed; "that is to let the real murderer feel free of suspicion. It is a case of giving him rope, don't you see, in the hope that he will hang himself."

"Still"—he perturbedly ran his hands through his hair—"I must confess there are a lot of things I cannot understand. The theory of robbery being quashed by the discovery of the jewels under Varney's pillow, who else could have had a motive for the crime? Unless, indeed," he added, "some one deliberately placed the stuff there to throw suspicion on Allen."

Cynthia's hand appealingly sought his, and she paled and then flushed in an unwonted confusion.

"Worden," she faltered in a voice hardly above a whisper, "I—I put those things under Allen's pillow!"

"You?" He turned to her thunder-struck.

"Yes. Oh, not—not afterward," with a nervous catch in her throat. "It was early, before you men had come in from the smoking room. Shiela had already cried herself to sleep, don't you understand, and I got so worried thinking over the temptation she offered to a thief, that I crept quietly up and took everything she had. Then the idea struck me of putting them under Allen's pillow. I thought that finding them there would give him an opportunity of returning them to her, and perhaps that would lead to their making up. Will I," she questioned tremulously, "will I have to go on the witness stand, and tell all about it?"

Worden, after a moment's reflection, comforted her fears. "No, I think not," he decided. "At least not just yet a while. And, really," he pondered, with a frown, "I don't see how this disclosure of yours makes matters any less black for Varney. The motive, unless we ascribe it to his jealousy, still remains as much of a puzzle as ever."

"Wait!" Cynthia sat up with a sudden, startled inquiry. "Worden, was there a diamond brooch at Shiela's

neck, when you found her this morning?"

"No; she had no jewelry on of any kind, I tell you. I remember, though, since you speak of this, that her silk robe was open at the throat as though some fastening had been wrenched away."

"Well, then," Cynthia spoke with prompt conviction, "the murder was for robbery after all. I had forgotten for the moment, but that one brooch—a spray with three big diamonds set in it—I did not take. The clasp was hard to open, and as she started to stir while I was working over it, I got fearful of awaking her and left it."

"H'm!" Worden stroked his chin, and a gleam almost as of triumph shot into his eye. "Three big diamonds, eh? Yes," he commented, "it was robbery beyond question."

They were silent for a time, each of them apparently following out some idea to which this latest revelation had given birth. Then Cynthia, curious, womanlike, to know whither her companion's reflections were leading him, turned to him with a little coaxing gesture.

"Haven't you any suspicions, Worden?" she asked. "It ought not to be hard, I should think, to put one's finger on the guilty man."

"Yes," he nodded grimly, "I have more than a suspicion; I have a certainty. Although murder is a bit out of his line, it was 'Diamond Sammy' Cook. And," he added slowly, "I think I know at last who 'Diamond Sammy' Cook is."

Cynthia tossed her head in manifest skepticism. "'Diamond Sammy?'" she repeated impatiently. "I declare, Worden, that man is becoming an actual obsession with you. Everywhere you turn, you think you see him. Look at the practicalities, dear boy. How could your 'Diamond Sammy' have gotten on that car? Has he a 'cloak of darkness,' and 'shoes of swiftness,' and a whole lot of other supernatural powers?"

"No very great supernatural powers were required," rejoined Worden

dryly. "The loose way things are run nowadays, a clever crook would have no especial trouble worming himself into good society. I think, in short, that 'Diamond Sammy' was one of the members of our party."

"Which one?"

But Worden hedged. "I am not ready to say that yet," he muttered, "even to you. Give me a week's time, though, and I am very positive I shall be able to tell you."

"And give me a week's time," Cynthia spoke up as though under a sudden prompting, "and I shall prove that you are entirely wrong. I have an idea of my own in regard to this case, that I think may be well worth following up."

She refused to tell him any more than this, and possibly lest she might be led to betray herself, at once sent him away, claiming that she wanted to be alone to study out the hypothesis which had suggested itself to her.

For the next day or two, she seemed busily engaged, whenever Worden dropped in; and although she did not deny herself to him, and they even discussed various phases of the tragedy, both sides maintained a stubborn silence as to what was being accomplished. It had almost developed into a duel between them as to which should successfully solve the mystery.

Before the end of the week, though, Mrs. Wills, true to her promise, whirled down to police headquarters in her limousine, and presented herself, a flash of triumph in her eye, at the commissioner's office.

"I've got your man, Worden!" she exclaimed, her youth and beauty pervading the official atmosphere like a touch of June fragrance.

Worden glanced up eagerly. "Diamond Sammy?" he asked.

"Diamond Sammy? Of course not. I told you, you were clear off the track. Read that," tossing a letter down on his desk.

He examined the address printed in the corner of the envelope. "Magician's Club, eh?" he questioned a trifle perplexedly.

"Yes; I have been fairly bombarding its members with inquiries for the past three days. But I have finally got what I wanted. Read the letter through, and you will see for yourself."

He did so, but merely frowned as he finished.

"Why, there is nothing in this," he protested. "It is simply a reference from Ludini, the Wizard, for one John Steptoe, stating that Steptoe was his assistant for about two years, and was particularly expert in cabinet tricks. How can that have any bearing on—"

"Ah, but don't you see?" she interrupted. "John Steptoe was the porter on our car, and his association with Ludini shows how he could have been found tied up and apparently helpless, as you discovered him. He could slip his hands in or out of those cords by simple contraction of his muscles. I came to suspect him first from remembering how I had noticed his wrist suddenly swell, when he juggled that plate of soup at dinner. The rest was only a matter of tracing up his record."

Worden leaned back in his chair and gazed at her for several minutes without speaking. Then he reached for the telephone, and summoned Inspector O'Hara, chief of the detective bureau.

"You are still holding Steptoe, the colored porter, as a material witness on the Dahlgren murder, are you not, inspector?"

"Yes, sir, although I was thinking of turning him out to-day. The coon really knows nothing, and we can always get hold of him easy enough at any time we want him."

"Perhaps," observed Worden ruefully, "he knows considerably more than we imagined. Just cast your eye over that letter a minute, inspector," handing it to him, "and then suppose you go down and third-degree the fellow a while on his ability to slip himself in or out of fetters."

The bare hint was enough for the shrewd old detective. His eyes narrowed as he glanced hurriedly through the letter; then, with a quick salute, he hastened off upon his mission.

For a half hour or more, Cynthia and Worden waited impatiently for some report. They talked but little, for both were under tension. But at last the telephone jangled, and Worden, grabbing it up, announced over his shoulder: "It's O'Hara!"

No need was there, either, to speculate upon the purport of the policeman's message, for his tone was full of elation.

"He's come through all right, commissioner." O'Hara made no effort to conceal his satisfaction. "He weakened the minute we sprung that Ludini business on him, and now has made a clean breast of the whole thing. He says he didn't intend to kill Miss Dahlgren, but merely to make a haul of her jewels and drop off the train. She wakened on him, though, and starting to scream, put up such a struggle that to silence her he used the knife, which, by the way, he had previously stolen from Varney's grip. Then, when he realized what he had done, the idea

came to him that he could plant the thing on Varney, and he framed up the rest of the deal."

Worden hung up the receiver, and squared around toward Cynthia.

"By Jove, you ought to be the police commissioner, and not I," he granted, not without a trace of chagrin.

"Oh, no," she disclaimed modestly, as she gathered her things together to leave. "We worked it out, in a way, together. You have no idea how much you helped me, Worden."

"I helped you?"

"Yes; if you hadn't been so cocksure that you were right, and hadn't combated me so vigorously, I would never have dreamed of following up the investigation."

"I'll tell you," halting in the doorway, with a whimsical smile, "don't you know, a few good clashes between us are more apt to bring about that reconciliation than all the schemes that silly old Glasgow could get up from now to doomsday?"



## SORROW AND LOVE

SORROW and I have parted fellowship,  
Sorrow and I have parted company;  
Now shall Life's golden hours as smoothly slip  
As beaded prayers upon a rosary.

For Love stood waiting on the highway long,  
And led me from the noise of hurrying feet  
Into a garden full of spice and song  
And wonder flowers rich with nectar sweet.

I laughed aloud as laughs a child at play,  
Dancing and singing through the golden land.  
When lo! There stood before me in the way  
Sorrow and Love, linked lightly hand in hand.

HELEN LANYON.



**F**OR what," I had written him, "does it profit a woman to gain the whole social world and to find her soul a little heap of wind-swept dust? I know nobody who is so good at the rehabilitation of soul dust as yourself, and this with no exertion on your part that would confer a deep obligation. It is just an unconscious attribute of your voice and manner and mentality, and I have too long been without its effect.

"Two years ago you told me that I needed mind rehabilitation, and with the same uncomplimentary breath you refused to undertake it. I think it was because you knew perfectly that I would do any such small thing as the making over of my mind just for your asking, and not be the Oriental most women are—you recall our friend Hafiz: 'I will change my faith and my garments, but thou shalt pay for it.'

"Now that I have written a novel that, even should you not like it, has yet been sufficiently successful to fill my coffers and to be made into a play, you are to admit that I have really striven to attain what you so impolitely said I needed. I could not foresee that rehabilitating my mind would bring me all this social prominence, and that it, acting with several other things, such as an incredible amount of undeserved and indiscriminate praise, the sudden attention of men who are looking for material for plays, the reporters, the *éclat*, the money, would sweep what you have called my soul into a handful of dust.

"Personally, it was not until you made the distinction that I discovered that there was any difference between brains and souls, and even now I am not quite clear about the matter, save that, with a brain very much alive and able to do clear and remunerative thinking, I find myself distressingly lacking on the side that permits one to draw fine moral distinctions and to develop warm admirations for the things of real worth. It no longer matters to me about a man's character, if he has brains, and for women, with their silly little inexperience and narrow little prejudices, I have no use at all. You will admit this a pity, I know, for it will not be long before women will have no use for me, and then my work and my life will suffer. I except from my objections those women who are earning a living or accomplishing something really worth while. The radiant actress who is to interpret my heroine is more interesting to me than many men of achievement that I have known. My laundress, who washes well and indulges in profanity that would do India credit, is an interesting woman, and my maid, who is handsome and the prey of men who consider her below them in station, has strength and courage far beyond the untempted and double-chinned women we have to dine with, who cannot bear to hear a spade called a shovel.

"Providence, who is said to look after souls—it is to be hoped that Providence is not really accountable for all the



shady transactions saddled on it—has arranged that my play is to be rehearsed in your city. You observe now why I called it Providence. The radiant actress is installed in a hotel in your city, and I am summoned to confer with her, and with the clever and executive men who are staging my made-over brains. So there I shall take my improved mind and my dusty soul, and I want you to come to the appreciation of the one and the help of the other.

"It is possible that madame, your wife—for women are often so—may not encourage your consideration of feminine soul dust. Yet I find it impossible to imagine you married to any but a woman of understanding—and to her I beg you to show this letter and ask her if out of her exceeding abundance she will grant me a little of your time. As you never yet answered a letter of mine in time to be of any service to me, I shall rely on the telephone—which no man may escape—to announce my arrival to you and obtain your reply.

"And finally, my once dear friend, I am indulging myself to the top bent of folly in sending you a copy of a book of rhymes that my publishers brought out wholly on the strength of the success of the novel, and not at all—alas!—on their own merit. I have not autographed this copy, but I have added to it a date that, being a man, you will have forgotten entirely, and I have been incredibly youthful in marking, as we used to do for each other, with my thumb nail a phrase or two that I particularly wanted you to see.

"I cannot suppose you will like to receive a book of marked verse, since you are now a husband-man, but when a man tells a woman to improve her mind he is in a way responsible for every effort she may make to obey him, and novel and play and verse are included in this effort. Indeed, I begin to think that too much of my work is but homage "To one dead deathless hour," and there are even times when I can see the folly of being still

"Faithfully yours,

"FRANCESCA."

This, dear, is the letter I wrote him a few days before I came to you a year ago.

I suppose to a woman who writes the crowning experience lies in having written a book that is to be made into a play for the actress she most admires, and to be called on to assist in the making. In the days when I wrote for the pay-on-publication magazines, and had to send a manuscript ten places before it was accepted, this far-off goal seemed the unattainable height of all to be desired. You know how we say to ourselves: "This one thing and I shall be happy." And this quite in spite of the fact that we have found even a little hour of happiness is made up of not one thing but a thousand outer contributions added to as many inner preparations of the mind for its greatest guest.

I would have told you ten years ago that just to be with you for the purpose of adjusting my phrases to your voice and my thoughts to your ability would have meant happiness. That to meet intimately the clever playwright who was making my work into a play; that to talk over the rehearsals with your manager; to be written to by other managers; to be besought of editors—all of this would have been an ecstasy of happiness. And what was it to me? Merely of use as an added appeal to this man whom three years ago I had so nearly won and then lost in marriage to another woman; or, since I had use for an appeal, not quite lost. "To be won never quite," you once quoted, "and so to be lost never wholly."

I think I even expected an answer to my letter, though I knew it was addressed to a man whose profession bound him to the conventions and whose preferences led him into the middle way for the driving of his chariot of the sun, never too far or too near from the earth of his careful custom. I knew he was deeply an egotist. Yes—but so are all of us who create. Creation needs first of all immense faith in ourselves. That is why criticism that cuts too deep is so fatal to us; it destroys our self-faith and so denies our

self-expression. You who create living characters out of the written word know how helpful praise is; you will understand my almost childish eagerness to announce my success not only to the man I had lost, but to the wife I had never seen.

When I did see her I knew why I had been rejected; but I think I shall never know why she was accepted. I do not believe that I am critical of her, because of all stations in the world to me she seemed to hold the most desirable. It was because in all the minutes that I looked into her eyes I found not one gleam of impulse or one shadow of intuition. Her face was smooth and soft, with never a line anywhere of swift thinking or vivid experience or pain or yearning or understanding. Oh, she was no companion for an eager, restless brain, for a man subtly sexed and complexly characterized. But close to her clung the social graces. One knew instinctively that she would do the excellent thing, and say the proper word, and wear the perfect gown. An admirable wife for a public man, the very woman for the worshiper of the conservative!

Seeing her chosen, I knew just how I had offended with my ecstasies and my adorations, my black despairs and my fantastic gayeties. I, who see things in pictures and to whom an adventure is the breath of life! Yet—oh, my dear, how he would have held me steady, and how I could have swept him to a higher level than the middle way has knowledge of! But these are the things you have begged me to put out of mind, are they not? "Fill in and forget, as you would after a death," you wrote me.

I suppose it is this very ability to throw yourself into the experiences of another that not only makes you so great an actress but so good a friend. One can always count on understanding from you, and therefore one can always be absolutely frank. It is you who have made me believe that the rewards of whatever worlds are to come are for those who understand in this world, but I think even your under-

standing will be helped if I go back to the beginning.

The beginning, dear, was his first look into my eyes. Then, as time went on, our congenialities—they were too many to enumerate. His speech, his thoughts, his manner were deeply to my taste. There was in us instinctive need of each other. For me the steadier hand laid on mine understandingly in its restraint—the saner outlook. For him the lighter touch in his life, the impetus of enthusiasm—oh, he needed me, if only for the perfect understanding I could give him! I think he still needs me, and I know that I shall come to death hoping that if there is a world to come he will need me there.

I was twenty-seven—the age for the *grande passion* that Anglo-Saxon women are said to miss, and that no woman can feel in her first youth. I had been in love more or less all my life. I had met a dozen men I could have agreeably married had it not been for the necessity of living with them so much of my life. I had written of love until the name was trite to me, supposing that I knew all there was to know about it. And then I met him—most casually—introduced by a chance man as I stood in the doorway of a big hotel preparing to walk home after a late tea there. We looked at each other a moment and then he turned and walked with me.

The streets were wet and misty, and almost dark. We were separated by two clashing umbrellas, puddles of rain oozed about us—but how we talked and how we walked! I forgot all about going home where nobody but a maid waited for me. I was too busy realizing this sudden perfect companionship, so much more vivid for its touch of sex. I think I should have been walking yet but that I slipped, flying along as I was, with my head in the stars, and no notion where my feet struck the wet pavement. He took my umbrella from me, and closed it, and tucked my arm into his, and we looked about to see where we were, and laughed over our absorption.

We had walked far downtown, and

he asked if he should summon a cab and take me home, or if it would matter to anybody if we hunted up some place to dine, where our wet clothes would make no difference and I could rest and have hot coffee. He took my assurance that there was nobody in the world who concerned himself with anything I did except my publishers and an editor or two, with a protesting gravity, and felt my coat to see how wet I was, and asked if I was very tired; and I had much trouble to hide the astounding fact that these things made no sort of difference to me at all.

We found a little German family restaurant near by, where we had a delicious dinner beginning with an omelet and ending with a pudding, where three musicians played "The Blue Danube" over and over. I cannot bear to hear it now. We rode home in a taxi, still talking—talking—oh, surely of every poet who had ever written. Rosetti, Eschegeray, Heine, even—Baudelaire. He came in when we got home, and while I left him to change my wet clothes he played—Chopin waltzes with the soft pedal on as if they were being hummed.

And when I came back we tried to find the music for some of the poetry we had been babbling of; the sea for Swinburne; an inch rule for Wordsworth; life for Browning; love for Henley. The Chopin "First Scherzo" we said belonged to Swinburne's "Triumph of Time." Do you recall how the music rises to its splendor of ecstasy and sinks to its pathos of reaction with the one note struck again and again like a knell of desire, and the poem with its wonder of protest and despair:

There will no man do for your sake, I think,  
What I would have done for the least  
word said.  
I had wrung life dry for your lips to drink,  
Broken it up for your daily bread;  
Body for body and blood for blood,  
As the flow of the full sea risen to flood  
That yearns and trembles before it sink,  
I had given and lain down for you glad  
and dead.

And, at parting, that long steady look

through my eyes into my brain, into whatever was *me* within the brain, the look over clasped hands, more intimate than a kiss; the look that would wake even a hundred years' sleep, and I think if turned on me in my grave must cause me to move toward it.

You would have thought that I who had been much loved would have known how carefully love must be tended and watched. I had played the game often enough, subtly or frankly, with care or with recklessness, as the man of the moment needed these things to attract him; but when I loved, loved with every fiber of my personality, all the skill that had won me this woman's success utterly deserted me. I who could hear with my whole brain, who had the gift of speech and eyes that saw, I turned deaf and dumb and blind with love. Who has said that love was gladness? Love is pain. It hurts and gnaws and grieves and yearns. It locks up speech in your heart and clutches at you until you stumble in the dark, foolish and unwise. All these things I did. And he left me and went away, back to his own city, out of my life—blind himself, perhaps—and for a season the world stopped for me.

I could not write. I could not think. I could not answer questions, because always before me was one great question: Why did he thrust me away? I went over all the weary round that you and every woman knows—what had I done, what had I left undone? Would it have been different if I had been home the last time he called? And no word from him, no explanation! You would have asked—and I would now, but not then. A hundred times I said I will throw this thing off. I will find something else; but there was nothing else, nothing but the pain that paralyzes and lives by feeding on will and flesh. There is no relief to heart hunger. It has the tension of sleeplessness.

I let a year go by, and then one day I had all I could bear. It came to me almost suddenly that I could never escape this love, that its burden must always be on me, that its realization was

my personal struggle for existence, and that I would fight for it as one fights for life itself.

You cannot, in this stupid age of binding women to the unjust custom of being sued, say to a man: "I am coming to your city to see you." He would never forgive you. But it was not hard for me to find the address of so prominent a man, and I sent him a little note with scarcely a frank sentence in it and no truth at all, setting down a few brief reasons connected with my new book for my journey to his city and giving myself only a day there.

You would have thought Fate itself concerned in my small doings to make them difficult. My train was two hours late, yet he waited those two hours for me at the station, since they posted the tardiness in relays that would not permit a man to leave and return in time. I met him again after the year's silence as though we had parted yesterday, and yet there was a subtle difference about him, an accentuation of his gravity, a lack of smartness in his clothes, a new carefulness in his words.

And everything that could happen to us. It rained—one of those storms in which the dust blows before the rain comes, until you are blinded and choked. The machine he was driving broke down. He had to leave me early in the afternoon. Still, I had enough to take back with me to live on for a month or two. I had the sound of his voice, and the poise of his head, and the swing of his shoulders vividly before me.

Yet I was more than weary of this thing of being a woman, of having to draw back from the great fulfillment of my life because I could not say to a man: "Why do you not confess the love that I know you have for me? What is it that stands between us? You know that I love you, that I would cherish and live for you all of my life. Why do you not ask me to be your wife?" But a woman can do nothing—nothing frank and outspoken and direct, even when the thing that is greatest to her in her life is slipping from her hands. All her effort must be un-

derhanded, subtle, indirect, and, in most cases, futile enough.

I said to myself, returning from that trip, that I would give one more trial to femininity; that I would use all the pretenses that women have had to make into weapons for so long that they are called womanly conduct; that I would summon to my assistance all the arts of personality that beguile and tempt. Failing this, then I would fling aside this hampering femininity, and I would frankly tell him that I wanted to be his wife. I was self-supporting, and so not asking him to undertake my care. I would go to him as a man goes to a woman, able to recount to him whatever of advantage to him might lie in marriage to me.

And so, trying still to be feminine, I began to write to him. Writing is my business and my gift. I had long ago mastered the technique of producing with the written word any given effect I chose. I spent myself on the creation of deliberate effects. "Such letters—such letters as you have written to me!" he said to me later. Yet they held no word of love. They considered *him*, his character, his work, his moods, his appearance, his life. I had at my command all the resources of the weaver of tales. I filled my letters with adventure, I made myself pursued of other men that I might write to him about it. And then when the time seemed right I went to his city again.

The time was right. I knew it with the first clasp of his hand. Yet once before I had thought to trust only to my love for him and his unspoken love for me, and he had let it remain unvoiced and had gone away from me; and it is, I suppose, the law of the ages that no woman may believe in a man's love until he gives it tongue—and perhaps not then unless he asks her to be his wife. This time I put no trust in the power of my love. Instead, I brought to my aid the power of—I will call it femininity as I have before; womanhood it was not. I became appealing. My flattery descended softly to the depths of vanity that lie below

character. I let my veil untie itself and float past his face almost around his neck.

We motored in the teeth of a gale out of the city to the shore where the waves dashed and crashed on the rocks and the wind swept over us. I took off my hat and let the wind shake out my hair until it swept his face, and—he kissed me. It was no boy's kiss of fortuity, but a man's kiss that broke through the magic hedge of the castle, wakening all the sleeping ones within—a kiss of wakening, indeed, of mating, of fulfillment.

In a little while he spoke my name. I can still recall the thrill of the sound that I thought must now be followed by the dear old question. I wonder if you can realize how tensely every nerve was strung, how this wonder of love was overwhelming me—and then—and then—only a low-strained sentence of renunciation; he must never allow himself to see me again.

I went quite mad. I called him cheat and coward. I asked in what I failed him, and why I was unfit to marry him.

He looked at me and his face went white, while a horrible amazement filled it.

"Have you not known all these months?" he asked. "Did you not know when you came here, the first time I had seen you in a year? Do you mean to tell me that you did not know why I left you, and that all this while you have had no reason for my silence and my restraint? Francesca—I am—married. I went away from you—to be married. I had no thought but that you knew. The papers were full of the fiancée that came across the world to marry me, full of the news of my marriage. It was not a thing that I could speak to you about."

"Say it again," I cried. I could not grasp it. It seemed an ending incredible of a thing so immortal. And then I fell to moaning over and over: "Oh, I did not know! I did not know!" Indeed, I was quite mad.

I suppose the man had his own misery to contend with, but when he offered me little soothing sentences for

this horrible blankness that he had thrown into my life it was more than I could endure. I found all the words that I had so long been denied. There are words even for torture if one is mad enough to have forgotten all reserves. All the high hopes that hour by hour chilled to despair when he left me without a word I gave him to look at—all the year's foolish waiting and suffering.

He had almost nothing to say—what was there to say? He had been engaged to be married when he met me, to a girl whose father held a diplomatic position in China. He could not leave to go to her, and she had already started for home to marry him when I became a factor in his life.

I would not find an explanation in these things. An engagement was not a marriage. How could a man marry one woman loving another? What woman would be so married? Any girl would release a man when told such a truth, and no real man could withhold such a thing from a woman, no woman could wish it withheld.

And, "You are wrong," was all he said. I had a horrible suspicion that perhaps, after all, I was not loved—there had never been act of love or word of love until that day. I had only my own conviction, born of my almost perfect understanding of the man, but blinded, perhaps, by my own love. He must have seen this fear in my eyes, for he answered it—unwillingly, as though it were forced from him: "Yes, I loved you. I still love you."

We turned back to the city, and after a while he spoke to me of my own life. Then it was that he told me that I needed the mind rehabilitation that I read you of in the letter that I began my story with. He told me that I needed to make over my life, standing alone, until I had realized my best self, when I would find that realization a finer and happier one than any that could come of love. I think he knew that for me this could not be true, but he also knew that his slightest suggestion held for me the weight of the world, and that I was facing dissolu-

tion mental and moral; that I had need of the thing that holds men and women steady in despair—absorbing work. But such work as I do is hard when it is done as mere work, with no lift of the spirit, no inspiration of joy, no lovely need of expression. I think no other pain can ever touch me, having lived through this.

I fell ill for a while on my return home, a foolish, nervous illness that for all its excellent name was only the giving way of the props of my universe. The mind that strove to prevail and failed was ill. It is an illness that more often follows failure than we believe. I had to cure the mind of its desire to give up all other achievement, because it had lost its most desired one. I had to try to drive out the feeling that the best had been lived and that nothing else mattered, and to help me in this I had no one dear to me. You recall that was before I had met you, and I lived all alone with the maid who had been with me for years—so good a maid. Is it not Meredith who says that a woman who has a good lover, a good friend, and a good servant has little more to ask of fortune?

Sometimes when things grew too hard I wrote him letters. He did not answer them. I do not suppose you know what it means to watch for a letter day after day, to say after each disappointment, next time, perhaps; to go on saying it through months of weariness; if it is a woman's trick, this.

One night my pain grew too heavy for the assuagement of the written word, and I went to the telephone. Long-distance is a relentless pursuer. I sat shivering by the telephone, wondering what the sound of his voice would mean to me after all these months of silence. At the little short ring long-distance gives, I think my heart stopped beating.

"He is not in the city," said long-distance, "but his wife is. Will you speak to her?"

I declined to speak to his wife, and asked them to find out where he was; that, wherever it was, I might telephone him; and the answer came back that he

was in my own city—at a hotel three squares from my house. Almost within reach and he had made no effort to speak with me! I think it was there, when I hung up that receiver, that I said that I would not give him up—no, not for any woman that he did not love, wife though she might be.

You know that I could not be a woman without asking those who knew this other woman about her. There were many who did know her, and women continue to tell other women unspeakable things about themselves. So I learned that the supreme destiny for the attainment of which I would have walked with Death and Shame and Misery, this other woman tossed aside as too troublesome to be bothered with. And it was given me to know that here at this point, if I chose, I could destroy this marriage utterly. He was no man to live his life with no child of his own to take it up where he laid it down. He was a man, and fatherhood meant to him what maternity does to some women. I knew—I knew. I knew this man would forever belong to the woman who bore his child, that he would never dishonor her, that he would never disappoint her—and no more could be asked of love. Yet though I knew this I had then no wish to use the knowledge, or, at least, no wish that I would admit to myself. I wanted his friendship. I could not see why even his marriage should deny me this.

And then I found that he would not see me. Yes, I heard his voice over the telephone, at last. It was low and hesitant in its denial of me; but it was denial, and there was no friendship in it. I recall I hung up the receiver and sat beside the telephone saying over and over to myself a silly little phrase we used to sing in our girlhood: "For friendship oft to love hath turned, but love to friendship never." And the foolish little tune dwelt on the never and sang it over and over in my tired brain. I do not know if you can realize what just seeing the man meant to me—just to look at him for a few minutes. Abject, isn't it, but worn



nerves and hungry hearts are not fastidious as to relief. Had I been a man I could have achieved what seemed to me so great a need by pursuit. I could have forced the woman who meant so much to me to consider me, but I was a woman, and there was nothing for me to do but bear it.

I sat all night looking at the telephone, and then, sleepless and half frantic, I said that since I had to endure the disablement of being a woman I would make use once more of women's weapons. I would forever be denied speech with the man I loved unless my wit achieved what the straightforward way could not.

I took up a time-table to find what trains reached New York from his own city. There was one at eight, and it was then six. In twenty minutes the telephone in his hotel room was rousing him with a dispatch that asked him to meet his wife, arriving on that eight o'clock train. You will believe that I hated to use either her name or title; indeed, I do not think I could have planned or executed so tasteless a lie had I not been so tired with my sleepless night and so overwrought with the causes of it that my judgment, and even what sense of right and wrong I had, were in abeyance.

It was not even a clever plan, for the station is a large one, and though I counted on there not being many people in it at that hour I might easily have missed him. Yet I did not miss him. He was turning away from an inspection at the gate of all the passengers that had come on that train when he met me. I was just saying good-by to my maid who, satchel in hand, was departing for the One Hundred and Tenth Street Station, where she would leave the train and return by subway richer by several dollars.

He did not then know that the telegram was fictitious—it was conceivable that a train had been missed or a plan given up. And we were then face to face. I was pale and almost ill from fatigue and nerve strain and the tears came easily, and then to see him even at the cost of a silly lie. I did not have

to simulate faintness. He had not taken the hand I had held out to him, until I swayed a little, then he took my arm and held me steady.

"I am afraid," I said, "that things are whirling round me rather strangely. It is—a little sudden—this seeing you."

"Keep quiet a moment, Francesca. Sit here. In a moment I will put you into a cab."

I had visions of a closing cab door and immediate loss of him, and I clung to his arm until the cab came, and then he had to lift me into it. No man could have left me so. Inside he held a half-fainting woman on his arm, and the journey to my house was not long enough to give me time for recovery.

"Can you walk in?" he asked.

"I—I think so," I replied.

He looked at the taxicab register, and as he helped me out, he handed the chauffeur his money with one hand, holding me with the other. The cab moved away. I was trembling by this time, with no need to act, and he could not help but feel it. He almost carried me up the steps. Inside the outer door we were hidden. I handed him my latchkey and leaned shivering against the outer door, watching him. He opened the inner door, and as he turned I knew he was ready to leave me and swayed forward and would have fallen but for him.

You have not to be told that he had to carry me into my library and that with the maid on her way to Harlem there was nobody there. My hair had caught on a button of his coat; I thought it would never come undone. He had to sit beside me holding me with one arm while he loosened the hair with the other hand, and yet, save for the joy of seeing him, of being with him a little while, I gained nothing from my foolish little lie. He waited until the maid came back—about an hour—and in the hour I had time to ask for the friendship I felt was possible between us. His answer was only that he could not undertake the task of making into the narrow mold of friendship that which was keeping him from an-

swering my letters or listening to my voice.

Hearing this and knowing that he would soon find it out for himself, or be able to guess it, I told him that I had sent the dispatch with the sole intent of seeing him. He gave me a curious look and made no comment. In a little he spoke of my work. There was no word of it that had escaped him; he seemed to know it by heart. He told me it was not yet good enough, for all its success, and then as he was leaving he held my hand a moment, and he said:

"Francesca, you are too good to descend into such subterfuge as this of the morning."

My dear, I had not had any sleep and I had been acting a fainty and rather hysterical part and—it was no time to be preached to—and I am afraid my last spark of energy flamed into protest. I told my mentor that compared with his appalling goodness we poorer-spirited mortals could not help but make a poor display. That my work was done under difficulties he had no conception of, and that if he did not wish me to try to outwit him—since being a woman I could not use strength—he must not refuse to see me when he came to my own city.

"I am," I concluded, "after all only a woman—in love."

"Ah, Francesca, Francesca!" he answered, and went away.

Sometimes pride does save when even the Communion of Saints and the Forgiveness of Sins do not. After that I wrote to him no more, busying myself only with the work he had not thought good enough. You will recall the result. In a few months there came the call to his city to confer with you about my play, and that is why I said at the beginning that all of this success meant very little more to me than what he would think of it. Then it was that I wrote him the letter I read to you an hour or two ago—a letter that, like the others, he did not answer. Yet at length he came to my hotel to see me.

Do you remember your interest in his coming and how you gave up your

parlor to me for the evening and advised me to wear the cloth-of-gold gown because it matched my hair and eyes, and how you quoted, "subtle, secret, amber eyes?" Ah, that night, that night—it is so dear, so dear, so tragic in its memories! I would give ten years of what youth is left to me to live it over again. Since he would not admit friendship possible I held to love, dreaming that love might be kept ideal. I held him that night in the hollow of my hand—he would have sacrificed everything in the world for me; it was my hour. Yet—fool that I was—I would not have what he had to offer while it seemed a sacrifice to him. A day or two, a week or two, and I said to myself I could make it seem ideal that he should give up the woman he did not love for the woman he did.

I was no young and inexperienced girl. I was a woman of thirty-two. I had known and been loved by many men; I had tested all that social life had to offer me here and in Europe; I knew deeply and thoroughly what I wanted. Nature speaks very clearly to the woman who listens to her—of her greatest destiny and her truest need; of the one thing in the world for her that should she miss it makes of mere living a little thing. A love so unescapable, so deeply binding on both man and woman is Nature's own promise of perfect parenthood.

Ah, my dear, if I had only hidden these deeper things behind soft words and clinging hands and drawn him to my side with these cobwebs of the senses that are so slight and yet so strong! Had I been only woman the pretender, the beguiler, I would have prevailed. But I had been this too often and earned only my own disgust. This night I was myself, and some of what you have heard me say to you he learned.

I told him that in all this world and the next no woman would love him as I did. That there was no hour since I had met him in which I would not have lived my every minute for him, lived or died for him as he bade me, gone down into the depths for him or

mounted to the heights. That though I were dead yet I must come if he called; that living there would be no night or day that would not bear its thought of him, no aspiration or belief unstamped with his image, that life would irretrievably cheat me in denying me the glorious motherhood only a man so beloved could confer.

Dear, he was ready, as men sometimes are, to give up a long fight against that which he deeply desired; he was ready for the letter of love, forgetful of its spirit, and then, scarcely knowing that I was doing it, I struck the deeper aspiration, the more ideal hope—and as it has done many times before, the thought of the little child rose up to lead him and struck from him all the thought of self. Had I been only the yielding woman, he would have taken me. But the woman he loved, hoping, however, blindly for fulfillment greater than the senses have knowledge of, he could not take. He drew away from me—oh, a world's width away with foolish phrases of my achievement and my brilliance, of the other men who loved me and of my chance for happiness with one of them, of the ruin he would make of it all—he would not sacrifice me.

Yet I saw in his face a great need and a great longing, yes, and a great love, and I was content to let him go away, dreaming the time was very near when neither my sacrifice nor his would weigh with him, when only love and need would speak to him.

I was still happy in my foolish dream the next morning when you yourself brought me his wife's card that you had taken from the boy as you came to my room. Do you remember her—tall and almost buxom, with eyes of china blue holding no depths and no promise, with hair no man could kiss, so sleek and hard it lay around her smooth forehead, with thick white skin and uncurved lips? Do you remember her important air and her patronage of you as you left us alone, her curiosity about me? And yet she was clever! Her very coming a master stroke, her plunging into immediate confidence a re-

source only a woman very clever or a very foolish woman could have used.

She began with the statement of my friendship for her husband, which she appeared to have known of before her marriage and to which she added years while she subtracted sentiment. She said that it was a friendship a man might well be proud of, and that she had always hoped to share it, the more since she had been reading my books and hearing of my play; that she had asked her husband to bring her to call, but he never seemed quite able to arrange it, and so she had come without him.

I scarcely heard it all, I was so overwhelmed with being there with the woman who was his wife. His wife—I said it over and over to myself trying to believe it. Here and there I caught a word about her husband, always that ugly word over and over. Presently I realized almost with panic that she was telling me that he did not care for her greatly, that she had married him knowing he did not; indeed, that he had tried to break his engagement for just this foolish reason, but that she had come a long way to marry him and would not give him up.

"And then," she said, "I loved him. Why should a woman give up a man she loves to some other woman? I hoped to win him after marriage—a woman has so much more chance then."

All the curious part of her speaking of these things to a stranger passed me by. Women have made me their confidantes not knowing me before this, because of some chance sentence I have written that holds out possible understanding, because of that avid interest I have for the hidden things in the lives of others that goes with the wish to write of them and is mistaken for sympathy. The thing that held me was her naming of what she felt—love. She wanted to hold him—from some other woman—and she was perfectly willing to sacrifice him so that she had her way; and this to her was love.

And only the night before I had spoken of love for him, whispering that there was no height it could not attain for him, no life or death it could not

suffer for him. And yet did I not want the same thing that this woman did—to hold him—yes, from all other women—at any cost? My self-respect, his honor, right and wrong, they might all go under if only he was mine. I had believed that no woman in the world loved as I did, and was not my love of one piece with the puny thing that swayed this china doll before me?

She talked on. I do not know with what flimsy excuses for asking counsel of me. Something about her inability to confide in any one of her friends because of her unwillingness to confess the situation, and therefore choosing me, something about my being his oldest friend and a brilliant and thoughtful woman who knew men and their ways and the motives that influenced them better than most women, and who knew her husband better than most anybody. I even think I made some answer, and presently I listened to her.

"I cannot hold him," she complained. Only a complaint; no accent of tragedy—mere inconvenience—and this was love! "I come to you who know so well how to attract men to ask your help," the suave voice went on. "Will you tell me what I can do?"

There was more of this, but I have forgotten it, for my brain was busy with resisting its impulses. It was so easy to say: "Give him up. The man who loves another woman is not worth striving to hold."

All my hopes—hopes of flesh and blood and spirit—cried out in that little time for the chance to live. I could have made even the china doll see it with my eyes and she kept on complaining in her monotonous voice: "What shall I do? What shall I do?"

And then the madness of self-sacrifice overtook me—a blinding vision of right and wrong, even of the dreadful right of that old command: "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off and cast it from thee."

For a moment I put the vision from me. In all the world this man was my only chance of happiness. Why should I go through life maimed because of some abstract thing called right? But

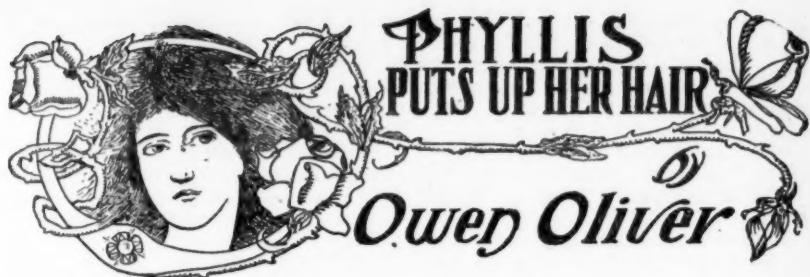
I could not keep from measuring this woman's love with mine. If I took him from her my love, this great sweet thing, the very glory of the world, was no greater than the little thing that moved the complaints of the woman before me.

And so I spoke to her. You would have thought me just that oldest friend who knew, just the woman wise in the motives that move men.

"To the mother of his child," I said, "your husband will always be kind, always tender, always loyal. If you are that, he will never leave you, and never give a word of love to another woman."

The cup that shall not pass, dear. It is an ennobling thing to read of in another life, but how appalling in our own. We urge the nobler side of ourselves up the steep ascent of this gruesome hill of duty, often to find the weaker side moaning over our torn garments and our bruised feet until we sicken at the sound. Even now, after all this time, I still tell myself that I wantonly threw away my one chance of real womanhood. That I might have held a child in my arms through all the weary years—a child of my own to live for, to train to strength and fineness and truth. I was alone in the world, I had already earned enough money to rear a child—coined brains and will. The world permits such women as I to live our own lives; and the pain of foregoing such living for a thing called right is still bitter with me. What glory in a life to come shall ever pay me for having missed this glory of the earth? What sorrow or shame in this world would have mattered had I won its greater gift? And now it is forever denied me. There is no other love for me, no other motherhood.

Yesterday she bore him a son, a son that should have been my child. And she will live—the mother of his child: and I—yes, I seem of the living, but you know that I am chained to a dead thing, a visitor of a charnal house. And, ah, it is true, it is true: "They who go with the word unsaid, though they seem of the living, are damned and dead!"



**T**EA had been early, so that Phyllis could go to tennis; but she insisted on staying "to make everybody comfortable" before she went. She brought Uncle William's paper, and put his ash tray at his elbow. She set Uncle John's chessmen on the table by the window, and arranged the stool for his gouty foot. She fetched Aunt Mary's account book, and Aunt Julia's embroidery, and found the thimble which had been mislaid—in Aunt Julia's pocket. Then she bowed to them ceremoniously.

"You can say good-by to little Phyllis," she announced. "When I come downstairs I shall be grown up!"

She laughed and ran from the room. She always laughed, and she usually ran.

"She means," Aunt Julia stated solemnly, "that she is going to put up her hair!"

Uncle William looked up from the money article.

"Why not?" he asked.

"Why not?" Uncle John echoed, holding the white queen suspended in the air.

"She won't be a child any longer." Aunt Julia wiped her eyes.

"Not to herself, perhaps," Uncle William agreed, "but she will be to us."

"Not to some other people," Aunt Mary said quietly. "We thought her mother a child, if you recollect, till we found her engaged."

Uncle William paused in the act of lighting his cigar, and let the match go out.

"Of course," he remarked thoughtfully, "some one will come along some day, and—I suppose our little girl will get married."

Uncle John put a bishop on the wrong color, and upset the black king.

"What nonsense!" he cried. "She isn't eighteen! I suppose she *is*, though. Dear me! How the time flies! It must be four years since she came to us."

"Four years and three months on the fifteenth," Aunt Mary stated. "It was at the very end of winter, if you remember, and she wore that little squirrel coat that William bought her for the journey. We thought her rather a trial at first."

"We thought we thought so," Uncle William corrected. "If we did, we've thought her a comfort for the last two years of the time anyhow. Sometimes I wish she were back at fourteen again. Well, she had to grow up; and we've grown her nicely. She has improved wonderfully. I often think that *we* have, too. The child has been an education to us."

He lit his cigar at last, and puffed at it.

"Yes," Aunt Mary agreed. "Yes, I have often thought so; but the improvement is in her, too. I never dreamed that she would be so sensible and helpful. She remembers things better than I do. I am afraid my memory is not quite what it was. I can trust her to dust the best ornaments even. She looks as if she might break them, but she never does. Her mother was like that. She laughed and talked and

seemed careless, but you could depend upon her all the same. Phyllis grows more like her every day. She has just the same way of smiling people into things. Norah was engaged at eighteen.

"People have more sense nowadays," Uncle William asserted. "If you and Julia don't put nonsense in her head——"

Then Phyllis danced in with her mass of brown hair fastened up at the back of her head, and her big eyes sparkling.

"Now!" she cried. "Don't I look grown up?" She seized Uncle William's paper. "You mustn't read silly money articles when a beautiful grown-up lady comes to see you. Now, Uncle Bill—I mean William, of course—*don't* I look very nice and grown up?"

Uncle William rose and turned her round. Then he bowed to her, and she bowed to him.

"Madam," he said, "you look *very* nice, and *rather* grown up. Well, well! Don't grow up *too* fast. I don't like losing my little girl. God bless you!"

He patted her shoulder.

She laughed and kissed him. Then she went and pulled Uncle John round from the chessboard.

"What do you think of me?" she wanted to know.

He stared at her as intently as if she were a chess problem.

"You are like your mother," he said slowly. "She was always better looking than the rest of us, and—God bless you, Phil!"

Phyllis kissed him; and then Aunt Julia kissed her.

"It might be Norah's self," she pronounced shakily.

Aunt Mary kissed the girl silently; adjusted a hairpin or two, and stepped back to note the effect.

"Twenty years ago," she remarked, "I helped your mother to do up her hair for the first time. I little thought—— It wants catching up here, or it will shake out when you play tennis. There! You look very nice, dear."

"And grown up?" the girl inquired eagerly.

Her aunts sighed, and so did Uncle

John. Uncle William managed to laugh.

"Does grown up spell more dress allowance, Miss Artful?" he inquired.

"No, sir!" she denied. "I do not require money, but admiration."

"Consider yourself admired!" He laughed again, and Phyllis tossed her head and laughed, too.

Phyllis turned away from him to her aunts.

"Does it *really* look all right?" she asked them anxiously. "All right to go out, I mean?"

"Yes, dear," said both aunts at once.

"It won't shake loose when I jump about?"

"Grown-up ladies don't jump," Uncle William teased.

"Well, when I play tennis?"

"No, dear," Aunt Mary assured her. "You've done it very well."

"Annie helped me," Phyllis admitted. "Now the lady is going. Good-by, dears!" She turned again at the door.

"Good-by!"

Then she went; and a silence fell upon the room.

Old Martha and the cook were waiting in the hall to have a good view, and the housemaid to admire her handiwork. Phyllis turned round and round to show the effect.

"I am grown up!" she announced grandly.

"Umph!" said Martha. "Grown up is as grown up does. I'll believe it when I see you act sensible."

Phyllis laughed merrily.

"When I want to be silly," she explained, "I shall let my hair down. Remember that, Marty."

"I've no doubt," said Martha grimly, "that you'll continue to be the plague of my life."

"You *do* look nice, miss," the housemaid declared.

"And grown up?" Phyllis demanded.

"Rather grown up, miss." The housemaid laughed.

"Grown up enough, the young gentlemen will think," the cook said slyly.

"Don't put such nonsense in her head!" said Martha sharply. "Young gentlemen, indeed!"



"If I look out for a—a 'young gentleman,'" Phyllis declared, "it will be *your* fault, Marty. You always said you'd make my wedding cake. I *do* like wedding cakes! I *really* think I must see if I can't have one. Now, Annie, hold the door open importantly. The lady is going out. Thank you for doing it. You're *sure* it won't fall down? Well, if I come running in the back door you'll know it has. Good-by!"

She swept down the steps, laughing over her shoulder. The cook and the housemaid laughed, too. Old Martha wiped her eyes.

"I brought up her mother from a baby," she stated. "She was always full of fun like Miss Phyllis; and a pleasant word for everybody."

"There ain't many young ladies like our Miss Phyllis," the cook declared. "And as for looks, I've never seen a picture post card to equal her!"

"And that's a fact," said the housemaid; "and if I was asked to name a gentleman that knew it——"

"You aren't asked!" cried Martha tartly. "And if you've nothing to do but talk nonsense you'd better begin to lay the table for dinner. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for putting nonsense in her head. Time enough for her to think of such things when she's five years older."

The uncles and aunts deferred resuming their occupations till Phyllis passed the window—waving her hand and blowing a kiss. Even then they watched her go down the road. Uncle John broke the somewhat depressing silence.

"We're worrying ourselves too soon," he observed. "She's a mere child, however she does her hair, and no one will take her for anything else. I don't suppose she has any more idea of sweet-hearting than——" His voice changed suddenly. "Who's that fellow she's met?"

"Young Royd," said Uncle William. "Doctor Royd's nephew. He's staying here on a holiday. He represents his father's firm at Marseilles, I believe."

"If Phyllis should take up with any

one who lives abroad!" Aunt Julia cried.

"He's still holding her hand," said Uncle John. "*Confound* the fellow!"

"It is the first time that he has seen her as a woman," Aunt Mary observed quietly.

"Umph!" Uncle William frowned sternly. "It looks as if he came to meet her."

"I thought she had some reason for putting her hair up," Aunt Julia told them. "Last week she said she wouldn't do it for six months. I suppose she wanted him to see her before he goes away next week."

"A good job, too!" Uncle John growled.

"When Norah put up her hair," Aunt Mary related, "Phyllis' father waited in the shrubbery to see her first. That was how I found out. I had no notion before. She seemed such a child; a *childish* child. You can never be up to girls."

Uncle William tapped the floor with his foot.

"She isn't going to marry before she is twenty, like Norah did," he asserted firmly. "I am her guardian, and I *will* not listen to any nonsense about engagements. She's nothing but a baby!"

"You are quite right, William," Aunt Mary agreed. "It is out of the question."

"Quite!" said Uncle John. "Quite!" Aunt Julia sighed.

"Norah married too young," she declared, "much too young. I always thought that struggling to make both ends meet in her early days undermined her constitution, and—I don't know. He was a good husband, and she seemed very contented. I remember just before the end. It was the last time she spoke. He was sitting holding her hands, and she smiled up at him. Phyllis smiles just like Norah, if you notice. They always had that way from the time they were babies. 'Oh, Jackie!' she said. 'We've had a *lovely* time!' They say this young Royd is going to do well."

"*Going to!*" cried Uncle William. "They're all 'going to'! Let him *do*

well, before he comes and asks for our little girl. I shan't listen to anything like an engagement at present." She's too young; much too young."

"Altogether too young," Uncle John corroborated. "What business has he to want to take her away from us, when we've brought her up, and— What would she have done without us?"

"What shall we do without her?" Aunt Julia wailed.

"We aren't going to do without her yet," Uncle William pronounced decisively. "I shall be firm; very firm. I look to you all to support me."

"You can rely upon me entirely, William," Uncle John promised. "She won't coax me over."

"Nor me," said Aunt Mary. "I shall tell her that it is for her good, and she must be guided by those who know best."

"Yes," Aunt Julia assented. "I think so; but we mustn't be hard on her."

"Hard on her!" Uncle William laughed. "Hard on Phyllis! Why, bless my soul!" He strode up and down. "All I'm afraid of is that she'll get over the rest of you, and I'll have you all on to me. Well, she won't get over me!"

"Nor me!" said the rest in one breath.

"I can be firm when it is for her good," Aunt Julia added. "Though I wish I hadn't to be!" She sighed.

"That's just it," said Uncle William. "It's not easy to be firm with Phyllis. She is such a coaxing little lady—bless her! She's too old to send away to school, or I really think—I tell you what I'll do. I always promised to take her a trip to the Mediterranean when she was old enough. Why shouldn't I do it now? There's one starts the day after to-morrow; the Blue Bunting Line. It would get her out of his way before things go too far. What do you think?"

"Excellent!" cried Uncle John. "Excellent! I'd come with you if I hadn't my chess tournament on hand."

"I'll telephone to the office for cabins," Uncle William started toward the door, but Aunt Mary called him back.

"It isn't possible, William," she objected. "She'd want more dresses and hats and—"

"Send them after her," Uncle William interrupted.

"They stay days at places on these trips," Uncle John pointed out. "You could send them to catch her up. You aren't going to let a dress or two stand in the way of her good, Mary?"

"I suppose she has enough for a week or so," Aunt Mary admitted.

"And she is so young," said Aunt Julia; "and we could buy her hats to-morrow; and some ready-made blouses and things. It would make a nice day for her, and put this affair out of her head."

"Oh, yes!" said Uncle William. "Oh, yes! They soon get over these fancies. The great thing is to divert their minds. There may be a little trouble to-night; but we must be firm, judiciously firm. I look to you all to assist."

All said that he might rely entirely upon their judiciousness and firmness; and that they left the direction of affairs to him.

"Mind she doesn't find some way of getting over you, William," Uncle John warned him.

Uncle William laughed carelessly.

"I am not easy to get over," he stated. "I may be easy in little things—I hope I am—but when I put my foot down it stops down. I'll go and telephone at once and engage the cabins."

When he tried to telephone he found that the office was closed for the day. So he had to defer the arrangements till the morning. They discussed the matter fully, and he and Uncle John decided upon the best cabins to get, and Aunts Mary and Julia planned out the shopping expedition. Then they heard Phyllis' knock; and they put on an air of cheerful innocence and counseled one another to be "judicious" and "firm."

It was dusk, and the blinds were down, but they heard Phyllis call "good night" to some one; and they heard some one call back "a thousand good nights!" She was very pink and smiling when she came in; and she seemed

to look more "grown up" than when she went out.

"It didn't come down," she stated. Her eyes danced.

"Good!" said Uncle William. "Good! You have passed the test, and are really grown up."

"Yes," said the girl. "I have really grown up, uncle." She sat beside him and put her hand on his. Though Uncle William was the oldest in years, he was the youngest in ways, and it was he on whom Phyllis relied as her chief counselor. "I have really grown up," she repeated softly.

"I always promised," Uncle William went on, "that, when you were old enough, I'd take you a trip to the Mediterranean."

She clapped her hands.

"I wondered if you'd remember," she said. "At least I didn't really wonder, because we always keep our promises to each other, don't we? It will be glorious!"

"You'd like to go?"

"Oh! I should!"

"Then," he said, "we'll go by the one that starts the day after to-morrow!"

"The—day—after—to-morrow?"

Phyllis flushed and then turned a trifle pale. She looked at Uncle William very intently. He was a quick-witted man; and he realized that Phyllis was quick-witted, too. He suspected that she understood. He frowned at Uncle John to take up the good fight, wishing to draw fire and keep himself in reserve.

"The very trip," Uncle John pronounced.

Phyllis turned and looked at him.

"We'll spend to-morrow shopping," said Aunt Mary, "and what isn't ready in time can be sent after you."

Phyllis turned to Aunt Mary. Aunt Mary and both uncles looked to Aunt Julia; but Aunt Julia's support failed; and Phyllis turned to her with a queer little laugh.

"Well, Judy, dear?" she asked. She

often addressed her youngest aunt so. "What have you to say?"

"Nothing," said Aunt Julia. "You must talk to your Uncle William."

Phyllis laughed and sat on Uncle William's knee, and twined her arm through his.

"I shall be just delighted, Uncle Bill, dear," she said. "Only I think we'll go by the trip next week. The one that calls at Marseilles."

"Marseilles!" cried Uncle William.

"Marseilles," Phyllis repeated distinctly. "Because—I didn't think I was brave enough to tell you all together, but—but I think I am. Teddie Royd is going to Marseilles in her. It is the *Scamew*, isn't it? Some day—not for a long time yet—not till Teddie comes back to the office at home, so that I can live very near you, dears. You don't know how dear you all are to me! Then I am going to marry him. I know you will take me next week, because—if anything will make me happy you always do it. All of you! I—I am very glad that—that I have grown up—for this!"

She tried to laugh; and instead of laughing she cried. Uncle William drew her head down on his shoulder.

"We will go next week, Phil," he said. "God bless you, dear, and make you happy!"

"Amen!" said Aunt Mary and Aunt Julia.

Uncle John hobbled over to them and patted Phyllis' hair.

"I knew you'd get over them," he remarked. Phyllis looked up at him, and wiped her eyes, and laughed. "Oh!" he said. "And me, too! You've put up your hair, but you're the same artful, coaxing, little—The same old Phil!"

Phyllis jumped up and kissed the four in as many seconds.

"Oh!" she said. "That's just what I wanted you all to understand. However old I grow, and when I marry, and whatever I do, to you I shall always be just—just the same old Phil!"

# ON GUARD



## Charles Neville Buck

**A**ND yet," declared young Harcourt, with an outward and argumentative sweep of his hand to all the palpitating color where the rocky beauty of Capri sunned itself, with the Bay of Naples basking beyond and the nebulous outline of Ischia bulked against the horizon. "And yet if there still survives a vestige of romance, this should be her refuge, her last stand against the encroachments of the commonplace."

He paused to look across the tablecloth where the remnants of spaghetti and omelet lay wrecked, and poured another glass of native wine.

Señor Manuel Blanco, the Spaniard who sat opposite, merely shrugged his broad shoulders, gazing at the shadow of Vesuvius as he indolently exclaimed: "*¿Quién sabe?*"

Benton lighted a cigarette, and a smile, scarcely indicative of frank amusement, flickered in his eyes.

"Do you hold that romance is on the run?" he queried.

"Where do you find it?" demanded the boy in flannels. "There!" He slammed a Baedeker of Southern Italy down on the table. "That is the way we see the world in these days! We go back with souvenir post cards instead of experiences, and when we get home we have just been to a lot of tramped-over places."

The three men had been lunching outdoors in a Capri hotel, with flagstones for a floor and overhanging vine trellises for a roof.

The boy resumed his thread. "Here we are, as examples. I am precisely

what I look. There you are," with a gesture of the hand toward Blanco, "a Spanish gentleman of title seeking enjoyment. You, Mr. Benton, are an American touring in his yacht—a trifle bored with things. I'll wager that a handful of this copper junk they call money over here would buy, in a bull market, all the real adventure any of us has ever known or will ever know."

"Who can say?" suggested Benton. "Why hunt trouble under the alias of romance? Vesuvius, across there, is as vague to-day as a wraith, but to-morrow his demon may go on the rampage and then——" His laughter finished the speculation.

"Yet sometimes you do meet a chap," reflected Harcourt, settling back in his chair, "who rather makes you think that it's just the fellow, after all. Some fellows still have adventures. It's got to be written in the horoscope, I guess."

"You've got a story up your sleeve," laughed the yachtsman. "We are fortified. Go ahead."

The boy paused in momentary embarrassment, looking up at the two men into whose society the chances of travel had for the moment thrown him.

Then, reading only friendliness in their expressions, he went on.

"It's not exactly a story. I was just thinking of a chap I met in Algiers and later on the boat to Malta. I ran across him in one of those vile little twisting alleys in the Kasbah quarter where dirty natives sit cross-legged on dirty rugs and eye the 'infidel dogs' as spiders watch flies from loathsome webs. Ugh! You know the place." He paused with a slight shudder of remi-

niscient disgust. "We had a glass of wine later down at one of the sidewalk cafés in the Boulevard de la République. He showed me lots of things that a regular guide would have omitted. The fellow was on his uppers, yet he had been something else, and still knew genteel people. Up on the driveway to the villas, where fashion parades, he excused himself to speak with a magnificently dressed woman in a brougham, who chatted with him in a manner almost confidential. He told me later she was a woman who might some day sit on a throne. I think her name was the Countess Aslaride."

Benton looked up quickly and he gave a sudden start as his eyes met those of the Spaniard, with a swiftly flashed message that excluded the boy.

Harcourt caught the glint of recognition that came with the name.

"Do you fellows know her?" he suddenly inquired.

Benton shook his head. His expression was once more casual.

"I saw the countess once only. It was at the roulette wheels in the casino at Puntal," he replied. "I was struck with her beauty."

"Who is she?" asked Harcourt, with instant interest. "She was a stunning woman."

Blanco answered. "Gossip says she is a lady whom the Grand Duke Louis Delgado honors with his affection," he vouchsafed. "But," he added, with a dismissal of interest, "the duke has only a collateral connection with the throne of Galavia. He is not even an heir presumptive. However, señor, we interrupt your narrative."

"On the contrary, you augment it," the boy went on enthusiastically.

"This fellow and I were on the boat going to Malta. He wore shabby clothes, yet in the smoke room and on deck he bore himself with an easy sort of good breeding.

"One night he and I were sitting together in one corner of the smoke room, and the steward was filling them up pretty frequently. The fellow drank a

bit too much brandy and soda and became confidential.

"He told me he had once held a commission in the British Army and had seen service in diplomacy as military attaché. Then he got cashiered. He didn't go into particulars and, of course, I didn't cross-question. He recited strange experiences. He was one of those fellows that Kipling writes about; a 'gentleman ranker' sort. But the great story was the one he told last."

The boy was becoming interested in his own recital.

"Wait till you hear," he said. "He had just come through an experience that he had hoped would reinstate him in the world. He had stood to win a title of nobility in this kingdom of Galavia you speak of, but it had slipped away from him."

Harcourt paused to take up his glass. Benton and Blanco sat waiting. Each was secretly conscious of a feeling of insupportable suspense, while the boy slowly drained the thin Capri wine and set down the goblet.

"I must watch the time," he began at last, drawing out his watch. "I do the Blue Grotto this afternoon. Well, to continue: This chap gave the name of Browne—he insisted that it be Browne with an E—though while he was half drunk he called himself Martin. He said he had fallen in with a grand duke who aspired to the throne of Galavia. There was to have been a tremendous upheaval of some sort—an explosion of an arsenal while the young King Karyl inspected a fortification. It was a villainous thing, of course, though he tried to paint it as an achievement for the betterment of Europe.

"Then comes the peculiar part. He was to act as messenger to a lady whom the duke trusted with a knowledge of the entire project. The scheme hung pending while they waited to learn whether Europe would recognize the government to be set up by the duke on the death of the king. That message was to come to a private shooting box on the coast by marconigram, and was to be relayed to the town by a flag station on the mountain ridge. Then

one night when the thing was being revised and perfected by a party of Europe's map editors in a Cadiz café, one Colonel Von Ritz, trusted by the king, walked in, looked around, and walked out again. His appearance was a thunderbolt striking disaster to their plans. For the Englishman to have gone to Galavia then would have been fatal to the conspiracy, don't you see?"

Benton nodded. "Certainly," he assented. "It would seem so."

"Now comes the wonderful part; the part where romance gets into the game," went on the raconteur. "Some unknown and mysterious man who looked like Browne himself ferreted the plot; presented himself to the noblewoman in question; secured a ring from her which gave him an entrée to the councils of the conspirators, and intercepted the relayed message. Europe stood ready to recognize the new government, the fuse was laid. Browne's fingers almost grasped his title of nobility—and nothing happened! Somewhere there is the man with the lady's ring who simply interposed himself between the king and his assassins; between *What Is* and *What Might Have Been*. Who was he? Why did he do it?"

He broke off and looked round.

"That was the story," he added, "except that they thought they could account for every man who might have done the thing. It was, they decided, some outsider! Don't you see, it looks as though wonderful things *do* happen under the surface of affairs, with never a ripple at the top of the water? Browne said, too, that the grand duke would eventually reign because most of the Powers wish it, but that he himself had lost his chance to benefit in the changing order of things."

"That," commented Benton, "is an entertaining yarn. Do you believe it?"

The boy nodded his head with decision. "I do, in a way. Otherwise, why should he have thought it all out? Of course, you wouldn't believe it. You are too rich to be imaginative. Wealth and the romantic sense are incompatible."

Benton yawned. "Why should an outsider mix in it?" he persisted.

Harcourt shook his head. "Browne intimated that there was a woman in it, somehow."

Benton's eyes came quickly up, then dropped from the boy's face, reassured.

"There was the young Queen of Galavia," supplemented the boy.

Benton leaned forward, his brows contracting in momentary tenseness.

"What about her?" he asked.

At that moment the whistle of the small excursion steamer below broke out in a shrill scream. Young Harcourt pushed back his chair and grabbed for his Panama hat.

"Caesar!" he cried. "There's the whistle. I shall miss my boat for the Grotto." And he hastened off with a shout of summons to a crazy victoria that was clattering by empty.

"If you noticed it, señor," suggested Blanco, after a long silence, during which he had studied the cone of Vesuvius, "our young friend's friend did not mention to him that the lady in Puntal, who was to be the duke's ally, was the same lady he saw in her carriage at Algiers. The same lady who gave her ring to the wrong man for a passport." Blanco laughed. "It was a very diverting story, though, as you say, señor—the dark Andalusian face was suddenly illuminated by the white flash of teeth as he laughed—"though, as you say, it does not sound probable. The ring, by the way, with which the countess was so careless, was it not originally that of the Duke Louis Delgado?"

Benton carefully took from his pocket a gold seal ring, unwrapping the tissue paper in which it was enveloped.

"It has the duke's crest," he answered after a moment's scrutiny. "I should send it back to her with my compliments if the game were fully played out. As it is, I may need it again." He paused, then resumed. "She owes a modicum of hatred to me and to her own mistake. But for that error, her lover might be on the throne instead of dallying, an enforced guest, in the palace of the kinsman he planned to murder. Yes, decidedly, she owes me a debt of hatred."



"The debt is even," replied Blanco. "We have ruined her hopes." He laughed. "She has paid you the compliment of mistaking you for the 'English Jackal'—Martin, Browne, with an E, which of his many names you prefer—the man who is a human scavenger!"

"Blanco"—Benton leaned across the table—"there was one phrase in the boy's story: 'Louis will eventually reign because most of the Powers wish it?'"

Blanco shook his head. "But that was an opinion uttered before I had the honor of enticing the grand duke on your yacht at Monte Carlo—of entertaining him with a cruise that landed him in Karyl's palace in Puntal. That makes a slight difference. The Powers have lost their instrument. With Louis a prisoner their hands are bound."

"The Powers will raise up another instrument!"

Benton rose, his companion following suit. For fifteen minutes the men walked in silence through the steep street where the shops are tourist traps, fascinatingly baited with corals and trinkets, and on to the beach, where the fishing boats lay and the nets stretched drying.

At last, Benton broke out tempestuously: "Blanco, I shall go mad!"

The Spaniard raised his black eyes in mild astonishment, but discreetly he withheld reply. He had never before seen Benton give way to vehement utterance on the subject nearest his heart. The American had, on the contrary, sought unnecessarily to mask his emotions; had sometimes been lethargic, but never before outspoken in protest.

Now Benton went on talking rapidly.

"In God's name, Manuel, what do I care who occupies the throne of Galavia? No other man under Heaven stands across my path, obstructing it, as Karyl does. His shadow lies across my future. You know—" The American drew out his handkerchief and wiped the moisture from his forehead. "Yes, why should a man not speak honestly to a friend who knows the truth? You know, that had

we not discovered the plot in time, Karyl would have been dead and I—I should have the chance of happiness. Does Louis Delgado, whose vanity covets a throne, find the cousin who holds the scepter more menacing than I find him? To me he is the man whose throne has conscripted, through a traditional sense of duty, a queen who finds her ermine unbearable, who loves me!" He paused. "Good God!" he volcanically exclaimed at last. "I have never said it to any man, because it was too much like murder, but I wish, I wish to God, I had not discovered that conspiracy!"

The Spaniard skillfully kindled a cigarette in the spurt of the match the gusty sea breeze made short-lived.

"And now," he calmly suggested, "it is still possible to let Europe play her own game. After all, we are amateurs, señor."

"And yet, Blanco"—the other looked at his companion and smiled—"and yet it seems that we are foreordained to protect the throne of Karyl. Knowledge seems wafted to us that the secret agents of the government cannot trail down with all the scent of their training. Fate throws this king upon our hands so that we have no choice but to act in his safeguarding or become guilty with a criminal knowledge."

"Shall we let things take their course, then, señor?"

"By God, no!" The American wheeled to face his companion. "You know, as I, that any threat to the throne of Galavia now is a threat to its queen." There was a pause, broken finally by Benton in ultimatum. "We must learn what these Powers purpose doing."

Benton threw back his shoulders and quickened his step.

"Besides, however much he be in the way, Karyl is a man and a soldier, and Von Ritz is a giant, and Delgado is a dreaming degenerate. We must stay on the side where Fate has thrown us."

It was twilight when the launch which had chugged into Naples for mail returned to the *Isis*, and Benton took the packet of letters from the bearer of the mail pouch. One envelope he in-

spected with an expression of decided surprise on his face. Manuel recognized the blue form of the Italian telegraph offices.

The American spread out the message and read it over, his brows gathering perplexedly. Finally he beckoned to Blanco.

"What do you make of it?" he said.

"The other read aloud:

"Miss Carstow and companions arrive Parker's Hotel, Naples, Tuesday afternoon. Rely on your meeting her with yacht. She will explain. Be ready to sail on her arrival. Reply care Grand Palace Hotel, Puntal. PAGRATIDE."

The Spaniard reread the telegram, then, with a mystified shake of the head, handed it back to the American who stood looking on, a ghost of a smile hovering about the corners of his lips.

"The names are new to me, señor," said the ex-toreador.

"Manuel"—the American laid one arm affectionately over the shoulder of the other—"before I ravished you away from the bull rings of Cadiz and Seville to cruise about with me on mad projects—back in the United States I knew a girl who wanted to be the freest thing in the world, as she was and is the most wonderful thing in the world, *amigo mio*"—he paused and drew a long breath—"I loved her, Manuel, and so did Count Pagratide. Because one cannot follow one's wishes where state matters intervene, she was doomed to marry Count Pagratide."

"Ah!" Blanco understood at last. Pagratide is Karyl and Miss Carstow the Queen of Galavia?"

The American affirmed with a nod. "And what do you make of it now?"

For a moment, Manuel Blanco paced the deck with the scowl of abstract thinking. Finally he halted and spread his hands in token of unsolved perplexity.

"I see nothing, señor, except that the game is not yet played out. Obviously, the king does not regard Puntal as a safe place for the queen. You are the only person who can be trusted and who is in his secret."

But Benton was busy scrawling in reply:

*Isis* and self at Miss Carstow's service.  
Waiting under steam. BENTON.

The following day was Tuesday, and found Benton nearer to cheerfulness than he had been since the *Isis* pointed her nose eastward under sealed orders for the run across the Atlantic. He dressed with a care that Blanco smilingly noted, and announced that he would lunch at Parker's.

As the coachman he had chosen at random from the mob of brigands at the custom-house entrance, cracked his whip fiercely over the bony stallion in the shafts, Benton began to notice with a sense of discovery, almost revelation, that Naples was charming.

At last, as he sat in the main hall of the hotel, his eyes riveted on the street entrance, he heard a laugh behind him, a laugh characterized by a vibrant mellowness which was of a sort with no other laugh. The sound brought him about in such electric haste that he almost collided with the girl behind him.

He had been prepared, of course, to find in her disguise nothing suggesting her royalty, yet now that he met her, standing alone; now that he could take the hand she held out toward him, with her heartbreaking, heart-rewarding smile, he felt a distinct sense of astonishment. His mind insistently conjured up the prince's carriage, with the blue and vermilion soldiery riding on each side of it, and once more he saw her as he had once seen her, with the stricken eyes that met his own as he clung to the iron fence in the midst of the huzzaing sidewalk crowds.

In a flash, too, the American saw this girl in the memory portraits of the brief, untrammelled period when she had been Miss Carstow, in America, and, when, admitting her love for him, she had rebelliously yearned to be free of the slavery of the crown.

Mechanically he took her hand and automatically his own closed tightly over it as he stood looking at the slender gracefulness of the girl before him. Jealously his eyes feasted on each fea-

ture, all known to him as the prayer beads are known to the devotee. Now the rangeful eyes that danced blue, or brooded gray, according to the mood they mirrored, were like the Italian skies overhead. The deliciously chiseled chin was uptilted, and the droop at the corners of the lips and the delicate furrow between the brows were missing.

"I'm having a holiday," she declared. "It's to be the queen's day off, and you are honored by being allowed to play host with the *Isis*. Do you approve?"

With a sudden sense of complete abandonment to the happiness of the moment, of mere propinquity, and with a laying away of sorrow against the time of her absence again, as one lays away an umbrella until the next shower, he laughed.

"Approve?" he mocked. "It's like asking the drowning man if he approves of being picked up."

For a moment her eyes clouded and a droop hinted its coming to her lips.

"But," she said in a softer tone, "what if you've got to be thrown back into the sea again?" Then she added: "And, you see, I have. Probably, I'm very foolish to come. The prison will only be blacker, but I could not stand it. I wanted"—she looked at him with the frankness that has nothing to conceal—"I wanted to forget it all for a little time."

He bowed.

With a frigid salutation, Colonel Von Ritz arrived. Even the necessity for escaping notice could not eliminate from Von Ritz the bearing of the soldier and the commanding note struck from physique and emotionless, unflinching features. Now, as he addressed the American with flawless courtesy, his voice still carried the undercurrent of hostility that no word of his to Benton had ever failed to convey since their meeting in America.

"If Miss Carstow"—he uttered the assumed name with distaste—"will excuse you," he suggested, "I should like a word about sending the luggage to the yacht."

Having reached a portion of the gar-

den where they could be assured of the most complete privacy, Von Ritz stood looking straight before him, his hands clasped at his back, his towering figure rigid.

"All that I tell you, Mr. Benton"—the voice remained icy, even, polite to a nicety—"is, of course, a message from the king."

"Meaning"—Benton smiled with a shrug of indifference—"that your personal communications will be few?"

Benton stood idly thrusting a pebble on the walk with the ferule of his walking stick.

"I am at your service," he said when the silence had become prolonged. Von Ritz had no more prejudice against long silences than has the Sphinx. The soldier slowly looked about.

"In the first place, his majesty commands me to say to you," he began, "that he seeks your aid because you have twice been the instrument of saving his throne and know the true state of affairs. Also because his majesty believes you will gladly lend yourself to any enterprise looking to the safety of her majesty the queen."

"You will convey to the king my appreciation of his confidence," rejoined Benton.

"Some time ago," rehearsed King Karyl's adviser, "after the foiling of the attempt to assassinate the king, you placed the kingdom in your debt by kidnapping the pretender, Louis Delgado, at Monte Carlo and placing him in the king's custody. His liberty was a menace to Galavia. Now, through the perfidy of trusted officers, Louis Delgado has again escaped."

Benton's brows went up in astonishment. "Louis the Dreamer is at large? Stirring up the thunder clouds again? You mean that?"

Von Ritz nodded. "His majesty can still trust me," he spoke in the same even voice. "Beyond that it is just now difficult to say who, even of the men about the king's immediate person, are friends and who are plotters. Puntal is honeycombed with treason. It is not the people," he explained. "They are not tainted with the crime."

"They," observed Benton, "simply don't give a damn who is king."

"They are not disloyal," went on Von Ritz, ignoring the interruption. "It is the army officers, the bureaucracy who have listened to the false promises of Louis Delgado and the siren song of the Countess Astaride, his mistress."

"Yes, and so?"

"His majesty is unwilling that the queen should be in the palace at such a time. Her departure in any ordinary way would have been impossible without discovery. If it were generally known that her majesty had left the country it would be tantamount to an admission to the populace that the royal family has begun its flight."

"I see." Benton nodded his head.

"Fortunately her majesty is not widely known on the Continent. Your yacht offered the only refuge, and since his majesty is already so deeply in your debt he felt that he could also ask this."

Benton looked narrowly at Von Ritz. "How much does she know of the facts?"

"Absolutely nothing. She was persuaded to come as a break in the routine of court life, which she"—Von Ritz hesitated, then went on doggedly—"which she finds distasteful. Even the fact that the duke escaped has been kept from her, and from every one who knew he was being held under the duress of escort."

"The king," went on Von Ritz, "has told her majesty that he hopes to join you shortly and steal from his duties a few days of vacation also. In point of fact, if his majesty leaves now—" The officer made a gesture significant of despair. "He remains to fight treachery and infamous conspiracy because a soldier cannot surrender his flag. I may not even remain long enough to accompany you to the yacht. At any moment his majesty's life may be attacked, and my place is at his side."

"What are his majesty's further wishes?" asked Benton.

"He asks that you keep the yacht away from cities where two dangers threaten. First that the queen may hear through the papers or otherwise of

the dangers that exist, and secondly that the queen might be recognized. He also asks that you remain within Marconi call. The simple name of a town with the signature Pagratide or Von Ritz will mean that his majesty relies upon you to reach that point and take him on board with the utmost speed. He also asks that if you can spare him, and of course if he is himself willing, Manuel Blanco return with me to Puntal. His experience there and the fact that he is unknown, taken together with his courage and astuteness, would make him invaluable. Perhaps he might learn the secrets of the traitors. We can trust so few men."

Von Ritz bowed. "I must make my adieux to her—to Miss Carstow," he said. "Her companions are the Comptessa Fernandez and the Comptessa Juarez, ladies in waiting, ostensibly Miss Carstow's aunts. She will, herself, present you."

On the forward deck of the *Isis* Benton stood looking toward the city and leaning on the rail. At his side stood Cara Carstow. She was silent but she shook her head, and the man, bending forward, caught the deepening thought furrows between her eyes and the twitching of her fingers.

He bent forward and spoke softly. "Cara, what is it?"

She looked up and smiled. "I stood just here, once before," she said.

"Do you think," he asked quietly, "there has been a moment since then that I have not remembered it? You belonged to me and I to you."

"I guess," she said rather wearily, "we don't any of us belong to ourselves or to those we love most. We just belong to Fate."

"Cara!" He leaned forward and gripped the rail. "Over there in America, you admitted to me that you loved me. That was when you were not yet Queen of Galavia."

He brought himself up with a sudden halt. She looked up as frankly as a child.

"I didn't admit it," she said. "We only admit things against our will, don't we? I told you gladly."

"And now——" He held his breath as he looked into her eyes.

"Now I am the queen of a hideous little kingdom." She shuddered. "It wouldn't do for me to say it now, would it?"

"Oh!" The man leaned on the rail heavily. The monosyllable was eloquent.

Impulsively she leaned forward, then caught herself. For a moment she looked out at the water undulating under the moon like mother-of-pearl on a waving fan.

"But it was all right to say I loved you then," she went on reflectively, after a pause. "I had a perfect right then to tell you that I loved you better than all the small total of the world beside, and that I was to become the Queen of Galavia because it was my destiny, my duty, just as you would have to take up a musket if your country called for you. It was all right to tell you that then, and"—her voice faltered for a moment—"and——" With a musical laugh, she added: "I have nothing to take back of what I then said."

It seemed to the man that Naples had begun to spin about the axis of Vesuvius.

Several nights later in the small garden giving off from the king's private apartments, and perched halfway up the buttressed side of the rock on which sat the palace, dominating the town of Puntal, Karyl impatiently awaited the coming of Colonel Von Ritz.

Somewhat wearily, the king turned and leaned on the stone coping of the outer wall. He lighted a cigarette, and the match that flared up threw an orange-red light on his face and showed eyes that were lusterless. At the same moment there was a sharp report, and Karyl heard the spat of flattening lead on the palace wall behind his head. He knew that one of the sentry boxes had answered his unasked question of loyalty.

Karyl waited. There was no rush of feet. No medley of anxiously inquiring voices. Others had heard the report, of course, yet no one hastened

to inquire and investigate. The king, pacing farther back where his silhouette was less clearly defined, laughed again.

Finally, Von Ritz came.

"It seems that we can trust no one," he said. "I had picked men I thought most trustworthy for the palace guard."

"One of them has just tried a shot at me with one of my own muskets." The king spoke impersonally as though the matter bore only on the psychic question of trusting men. "The spot is there on the wall."

For a moment Von Ritz almost smiled. "I was passing the point as he touched the trigger, your majesty," he replied, with calmness. "He, at least, may be implicitly trusted henceforth."

The lighted door framed the figure of an aid.

"Your majesty," he said, with a bow, "Monsieur Jusseret prays a brief audience."

Karyl turned to Von Ritz, his brows arching interrogation.

"A member of the French Cabinet Noir. He is the unseen force behind Louis." Von Ritz turned and, lifting his voice, added, for the hearing of the officer who stood stolidly statuesque: "His majesty will not receive Monsieur Jusseret. Any matters of interest to France will receive his majesty's august attention at the moment they reach him through France's ambassador."

Five minutes later, Jusseret, escorted by several officers in the Galavian uniform, entered the garden through the king's private suite. At the monstrous insolence of their forbidden appearance, Von Ritz stepped forward. His voice was even colder than usual with the ice of mortal fury.

"The king declined to receive you," he began. Karyl turned his head and looked curiously on. The keen, dissipated eyes of the sub-rosa diplomat twinkled humorously for a moment and the thin lips twisted into a wry smile.

"But the king is hardly in a position to refuse to receive me," he said, with a ceremonious bow to Karyl. He was imperturbable from his patent-leather pumps to the Legion-of-Honor ribbon in his lapel and the scant hair on his

scalp. "I offer the king the opportunity to abdicate his throne—and retain his liberty. Not only his liberty, but such an income as will make the cafés of Paris possible, and the society of other gentlemen who are also—well; let us say retired royalties." His smile was bland, suave, undisturbed.

Von Ritz took a step forward.

"Escort Monsieur Jusseret to the palace gates," he commanded, wheeling to face the Galavian officers. "The persons of even secret ambassadors are sacred."

The officers cringed back under his glance, but stood supine and immovable.

Karyl waited with a cold smile on his lips. His face was pale, but there was no touch of fear in the expression.

"Gentlemen, you are my prisoners," announced the Frenchman. Then turning to Von Ritz: "You have clung to the waning dynasty, Von Ritz, until it fell, but your sword may still find service in Galavia. I give you the opportunity now. We have often crossed wits. Now, for the first time, I win—and offer amnesty."

For a moment, Von Ritz stood whitening with rage, then with his open hand he struck the smiling face that seemed to float tauntingly before his eyes, and, drawing his sword, stepped between the king and the suddenly concentrated group of officers that moved forward, hands on swords.

Karyl was himself unarmed. He stepped out to lay a restraining hand on Von Ritz's arm when his head settled back under the impact of some great shock and things went black about him.

Von Ritz, struggling desperately with a broken blade in his hand and overwhelmed by seeming swarms of men, bleeding from scratch wounds in a half dozen places, felt himself sinking into a haze. He let his own useless sword hilt fall, and his tired arms were pinioned by several of his captors. Then Von Ritz heard one of his erstwhile subordinates say in a low voice: "Long live King Louis."

There had been no noise that could have penetrated beyond the king's suite.

Some hours later, Karyl recovered consciousness to find things—except the affairs of government—little changed. He was lying on a leather couch in his own rooms. The windows on the small garden still stood open and the moon bathed the outer world in a bath of shimmering silver. At each door stood a sentinel.

Karyl remembered that during Louis Delgado's recent captivity, he had fared in precisely the same manner, neither better nor worse.

The king rose, a trifle dizzy from the blow he had received, and went into the garden. There was no effort to halt him, but once outside he noticed that in addition to the man at the door, a second walked back and forth by the outer wall. As he stepped out into the moonlight, this man saluted.

"I have the honor to command the guard, your grace," said the man. "It is by the order of his majesty, King Louis."

Something in the voice puzzled Karyl with a hint of the familiar.

"Why do you remain outside?" he asked.

"Over this wall, any comparatively agile man might make his way to the beach if he succeeded in passing the muskets of the sentry boxes, and there are boats there," said the man, with a short laugh. "I am responsible for the guard, so I keep that post myself. I believe myself incorruptible, and men with thrones at stake can make tempting offers."

Karyl smiled. "What would you regard a tempting offer?" he suggested.

For answer, the man loosened his cape, and the king looked into the dark eyes of Manuel Blanco.

"I won into their confidence through the signet ring of Louis Delgado," he explained; "but, after that, I had no opportunity to leave them or communicate with you. This was all I could do."

Blanco stepped out into the moonlight and beckoned to the sentinel at the door. When the man came, the Spaniard pointed over the wall.

"Do you see that rock?" he asked.

As the man leaned forward, the



Spaniard suddenly struck him heavily at the back of the neck with a loose stone from the masonry. The man dropped without a sound. "We must risk it down the rock, your majesty," prompted the man from Cadiz. "There is no time to lose."

The two crept cautiously down the rifted face of the cliff, holding the shadow of the crevices. Past one sentry box they went safely, and finally they neared the second. They had negotiated the hundred feet of descent and stood pressed against the bottom, hugging the shadow and waiting a chance to slip across a narrow sliver of intervening moonlight to the beach beyond. Finally Blanco raised his hand in signal. The king and the bullfighter raced across to the boat that lay at the water's edge. In a moment more it was afloat and they were at the oars. At the same instant the musket of the man in the lower sentry box barked with a blatant reverberation. One of the figures in the boat drooped forward and sagged limply over his oars, the other man groaned and bent to the added burden of a task made single-handed.

In all the days that intervened since the *Isis* had sailed from Naples, there had come no word until at last a wireless message from Von Ritz had directed simply: "Cairo!"

Cara was once more the charming, frank companion that Benton had known in America. It was as it had been before the night he had first said "I love you," and when she had gasped out her confession that she, too, loved him, coupled with the revelation it necessitated; the revelation that she must follow out her destiny.

And Benton was torn between the torture of seeing her, loving her, feeling the psychic messages from her heart to his which both must leave unworded, and the mere radiance with which her presence transmuted his life. Always he felt the injustice of the fate, which, after robbing his life of happiness to give a queen to a trivial throne, then laid upon him the added burden of in-

terposing himself constantly between that throne and its assailants. Because he was a man, he would readily fight side by side with Karyl as loyally as if he were loyal, yet deep in his heart he knew that should Karyl fall—but there he always halted his thoughts, refusing to let them run forward.

It was the night of the confetti fête at Sheppard's Hotel in Cairo, that annual episode when to the caressing charm of nature in the gardens of the hotel, human ingenuity had added its decorative aid. Among the palms and flower-freighted vines, there were ropes of lights. Benton waited in the rotunda of the place for Cara and the other ladies of her party. He lounged on one of the divans that circle the walls of the octagonal chamber under the lattices and Moorish panels, a cigarette between his fingers and a small cup of black coffee on the low brass table at his elbow. His eyes were fixed on the wide stairs, down which she would come.

He heard his name called in a voice that sounded familiar, and looked up to recognize the boyish face of young Harcourt. Finishing his thimble of coffee, he set down the small Turkish cup and rose.

"Come back to the bar and fortify yourself against the thin red line of British soldiery out there in the gardens. You can get a ripping high ball for eight piastres," the newcomer laughed, but Benton smiled and declined.

"I am waiting for ladies," he explained. "I'll see you again."

"Sure you will." Harcourt paused. "I dash up the Nile in the morning, going to do Karnack and Luxor—you know, the usual stunt."

"Benton, do you remember the talk we had 'about romance?' Benton looked up to forestall anything that he might object to hearing, but Harcourt continued: "Do you know that chap Martin has been here again? Not ragged this time, but well dressed and in high feather. To-day he left to go back to Galavia."

"Back to Galavia!" Benton repeated the words in astonishment. "What do you mean?"

Harcourt laughed. "The scales have turned and his grand duke is to be king, after all."

Benton caught the boy by the elbow and steered him swiftly into one of the writing rooms.

"Now, for God's sake, what do you mean?" he demanded.

"That's all," replied the young tourist. "They've switched kings. Oh, it was so quietly done," he said, "that people of the city of Puntal don't know yet it's happened. The king died suddenly and Louis will have his throne."

"The king died suddenly!" repeated Benton. "I don't understand."

"Neither do I. Browne said the king was taken prisoner and tried to escape. He was shot."

"How did the news reach here?" asked Benton.

"It hasn't reached here, generally speaking. He said that the news of the king's death has not even been made public there, but the Countess Astaride has been here. Martin himself was in her party, and she read him the news from the duke's own code telegram." He paused. "However," he added, "that may not interest you. I probably bored you at first, but having told you the original tale, I had to add the sequel. I'll see you again."

"Oh, yes; of course," Benton replied mechanically.

Outside on the tiled and terraced veranda, where one sips tea under the awnings and overlooks one of the most varied human tides that flows through any street of the world, Benton and Cara sat at a table near the edge. Fakirs with spangled shawls from Assuit, beads, ebony walking sticks, scarabs, and souvenir post cards, jostled on the sidewalk to pass their wares over the railing. Motors, victorias, detachments of cavalry swept by in unbroken and spectacular show, and Benton sat stiffly with his jaw muscles tightly drawn and his eyes dazed; looking at the girl across the table.

She turned her eyes from the street, still sparkling with the reflected variety of the picture that hodgepodged Occi-

dent and Orient, telescoping the dead ages with to-day.

"Oh, I love things so," she laughed. "I'm as foolish as a child about seeing things that are new."

Then she added seriously: "And every silly Oriental of them all is free to go where he pleases—to do what he pleases. I would give everything for freedom!"

She caught the hard strain of his expression, and at once the sense of being barred back from life behind a scepter slipped in on her once more, frosting the momentary joy of forgetfulness.

The man leaned forward; his fingers tightened on the edge of the table with an almost insane nervousness, and his question broke from him in a low, half-fierce voice.

"Cara!" he demanded. "Cara, is there any price too high to pay for freedom—for happiness?"

"What do you mean?" The intensity of his eyes held her own, and her voice was low, uncomprehending.

"I hardly know." He spoke with an effort at self-mastery. "Perhaps I have less right to speak now than ever—perhaps more. I am only sure that I love you."

Something caught in his throat.

"I'm a cur to talk of it now. I want to think—of—of something else. But I can realize only one thing. I love you! I ought to think of what a splendid sort he was—"

He caught himself up suddenly, like a child who has blurted out some forbidden thing.

"Only one thing," she repeated softly.

Then, as she looked into his almost feverish eyes, gleaming under the scowling brows, the real meaning that lay back of his words began to dawn upon her.

"Was!" she echoed in startled realization. "Was? Did you say was?"

The man remained silent.

"You mean that—" She said the last three words very slowly, and stopped, unable to go on. The man sat silent.

"You mean that—he——"

She added the one word and moistened her lips, while one hand closed convulsively. Benton slowly nodded his head. She leaned forward toward him, her lips parted, her eyes widened, for a moment, and his heart pounded, for he reread there what he had read before, when the girl was free to look what she felt, to say what she felt. Then in an instant the look was banished and there were tears in her eyes. Not hypocritical tears, but genuine tears of tender-heartedness. Yet he had read in that first instinctive glance, before there had been time for mental rearrangement, that there came with the news a sense as of a manacle broken.

"Delgado escaped," he said simply. "Karyl was captured."

Again he spoke in few words. It seemed that he could not manage long sentences.

"He tried to escape," he supplemented.

She pressed her fingers to her temples, then leaned forward as she spoke in a low voice, with a catch that sometimes broke her utterance:

"Oh, it's not fair! It's not fair! I want to think only what a splendid boy he was. How he wanted to throw off royalty and free me; how he stood out bravely against those traitors. I want to think of him as he deserves, lovingly, fondly, not as one standing as a jailer at the door of my captivity. He was a knight and a gentleman."

"Yes, I guess he is—was—the whitest man——"

His voice failed. Suddenly he broke out like a boy.

"Oh, what's the use of my sitting here and trying to frame up eulogies on him? I guess he doesn't stand in need of my praises. I guess he can stand on his record."

"But," she said, "it's monstrous that I should find myself thinking of—of anything but sorrow. I did love him dearly—but only as a dear friend, not as——"

Suddenly she stopped and her lips remained parted. Then slowly she rose, carried one hand to her heart, and swayed uncertainly for a moment, steadying herself with one hand on the table.

The man turned to follow her half-hypnotic gaze, in time to see Von Ritz bending low over her hand.

At Von Ritz's elbow stood Pagratide. Slowly Benton came to his feet, his ears ringing, the terrace racing about him like a merry-go-round at a country fair. Then as Karyl turned from the girl and held out his hand, Benton heard him say, in a would-be matter-of-fact way, more tragic than hysterical, though it seemed that his words came from somewhere beyond Port Said:

"I have no kingdom. They will crown him—soon!"

He noted that Karyl held out his left hand and that the other was bound down in a sling. But these things were vague, because it seemed that the pilgrims' tom-toms had returned and were beating inside his brain, and beating out of time. He could see that Karyl's eyes also were weary and lusterless.

As he turned with an excuse for the travel stain to be removed, Karyl halted.

"Benton——" he said. Then he fell silent. "Benton——" he said again, forcing himself to speak in a voice not far from the breaking point, "Blanco—Blanco is dead."

Then he turned on his heel and went into the hotel.

Benton's eyes fixed themselves on a cigarette shop across the street.

"Lady!"

A grinning Egyptian face, surmounted by a red fez, showed itself over the railing. The girl started violently and then broke into an almost hysterical laugh. Thus encouraged, the Bedouin's grin broadened until it radiated good humor.

"Nice scarabs, lady! Only five pias—only one shilling," he spied. "Scarabs of a dead dynasty. Very ancient."



**R**EDFIELD, having only just landed that morning, was walking down Fifth Avenue enjoying the late afternoon pageant of human life, the pale October sunshine, and the exhilarating air which was like fine wine. He had been in South Africa, France, England on professional duties for the past four years, and he was feeling to the full the electric thrill of New York, the quickening pulse that beats in time, never to a moldering past, but to the vivid present, the inspiring future; and he looked his sympathy with this animating stir and throb, the gay purposeful reflection of life at its zenith.

And Rives Redfield was good to look at. Six feet tall, with crisp brown hair that was just turning gray on the edges, with blue eyes—the eyes that have looked over wide distances and visioned big things and are not afraid—he was a noticeable figure as he strode along with his free step and eager, interested face through the moving, changing tides of humanity on the sidewalks.

Suddenly he paused, scanned with discerning rapidity the face and figure of a man drawing near, and then, stopping just in front of him, put out his hand with a charming, irresistible smile.

"Hello, Piggy," he said genially, a trifle patronizingly, with a certain jovial sincerity and exuberance thrilling through his tones. "Glad to see you."

The man hailed in this abrupt, familiar, and somewhat undignified manner lifted his eyes, stared at Redfield

without a shade of expression in his face, blinked a moment or two, and then made response.

"Hello, Redfield," he said, not a suggestion of interest or even surprise in his tones, and quite as if he were accustomed to greeting this picturesque traveler every day of his life.

Now, Redfield had not seen Davis Callender, humorously defined as "Piggy," since college days, which accounts for his use of the descriptive title imposed then with the freedom and insight of youth; and yet he knew him instantly, as why should he not? For though the years might have marked Redfield with change, as they always do those who live in every thought, purpose, and emotion that an alert and asking mind conceives, they had merely hardened and stiffened Callender into a more accentuated presentment of a man who exists, never lives; exists to illustrate self—self-interests, conceived by one whose vision never strays beyond his own boundary, and whose thoughts are wrapped in the napkin of his own pleasures, if he has any. His round, immobile face unstirred by any emotion had grown rounder, coarser, more immobile; it had become a facial mask to all but keen observers. His mouth, it is true, suggested a capacity for cruelty, he had a nondescript nose, and round, murky brown eyes, the lids of which were slightly red on the outer edge; his figure, well-cared for, had changed very little, and he was, as usual, so carefully valeted that his outer apparel of the quietest blacks and grays bore no personal imprint.

Redfield twisted his mouth in a boyish grin of comprehension as he noted the absence of enthusiasm in Callender's greeting, and his eyes twinkled as he still held and shook Callender's unresponsive hand.

"Glad to see you, old chap," he echoed, a trifle more impressively, a shade more exuberantly. "Glad to see you. I'm just in after four years in strange countries and forbidding lands, and, by Jove"—he lifted his head and sniffed the air and looked about him at the people—"it's good to get back, and I swear"—he smiled that charming, irresistible smile of his—"even the dogs upon the street seem one's friends, and the stone buildings turn interested and sympathetic faces toward one."

In the first flush of Redfield's joy at getting back to his own, Callender had come in for more than his share of enthusiasm; now, in the revival of memory, of recollections of inherent peculiarities and temperament, the wanderer was prompted to probe farther into this mine of secrets and sulks than he would otherwise have cared to do.

"Come, walk along with me," he suggested genially, "and let me hear about old friends."

He knew that, if he could help it, Callender would never give him any information willingly; but a spirit of mischief, the desire to tease, the memory of encounters during college days when he had "played" Callender to tell him things that he knew the other man would have gone to the stake rather than disclose, urged him to find out just why he had been so coldly unresponsive to him in his greeting. He felt that it was more than natural impassivity.

"And how have you been?" Redfield queried conventionally in interested tones as they strolled along together.

"Very well," was the dull, noncommittal reply.

"Bound anywhere, or just out for your afternoon parade?" Nor was the questioner surprised that just here, both having reached a cross street, Callender turned off, murmuring that he had an engagement. Redfield, however, detained him.

"Wait a moment," he urged. "Tell me before you go about some of the people. I heard a vague rumor, it seems to me, of disaster of some kind to Winston, John Winston, financial failure, or something of the kind."

"Dead," replied Callender succinctly. "Ah!" Redfield could hardly repress an exclamation. "You don't tell me so," in shocked tones. "Too bad—too bad. And Mrs. Winston—" He hesitated. "I suppose she went back to her people in Boston?"

He spoke as if he had merely a perfunctory interest in the matter, yet he was surprised to note the droop of Callender's eyelids, slight thought it was, the almost imperceptible tightening of the mouth, but the murky brown eyes were absolutely unreadable as they were lifted to Redfield's without a shadow of expression in them, and grunting slightly with what might have been either assent, or "Good-by," in dismissal, Callender turned and made his way down the cross street.

"Boor!" asserted Redfield tersely, remembering that almost imperceptible change of expression as he watched him with a touch of contempt in his gaze; then he dismissed him, as the more absorbing thought of Mrs. Winston claimed him, and as he walked on soberly, ponderingly, it was Mrs. Winston, not Callender who walked beside him, an invisible companion. Mrs. Winston, who, spending her time with her grandmother in New York, had once epitomized the place for him, the gay, vivid, complex spirit which dominates and fascinates. It was because of her that he had left his native land four years ago, because, though he had believed that she cared for him, she had thrown him over for the more glittering and fascinating qualities of Winston, and now—now she was free again. Redfield drew a long breath, threw back his shoulders, his blue eyes gleaming, and his lips set firmly as he gazed at the horizon line far ahead of him.

Isobel Winston had taught him many things, but she had not taught him distrust of women; yet he had never felt the slightest inclination to test this

since he had left America, nor had he felt an interest in any woman, and he had assured himself that the thought of her had lost power to stir his pulses; when he gave her up he did so for good; never again could she appeal to him, he had told himself many times, and yet—here he was back in New York with the thought of her uppermost in his mind, her name almost the first that had come at his bidding, while in the spirit roused by Callender's refusal to give him any information of her, the spirit which never brooked denial or defeat, he was insisting upon knowing of her whereabouts and whether it were well with her; and he smiled pleasantly, even amusedly, as he visioned again Piggy Callender's face at the mention of her name.

Callender knew all about his love affair—all the world knew about it, and Callender's wife was Isobel Winston's best friend—and yet from sheer hatefulness he was withholding, in that interesting fashion characteristic of him, the information that Redfield had asked. But was he? With that strange persistence of doubt which is intuition in the reader of men, Callender's evasive manner lingered in Redfield's mind, and he concluded to keep an eye upon the unresponsive chap, while he made it a point to question his own sister that evening at dinner concerning Mrs. Winston, with the result that he fancied that her information needed sifting.

Isobel had never, so that sister assured him, been happy with John Winston; in fact, all the world knew that they had been exceedingly unhappy, due, of course, the informant was convinced, to Mrs. Winston's feeling for her discarded lover—Redfield shook himself impatiently at this—and when Winston had suddenly died during some disastrous financial involvements, leaving his wife with a small but quite sufficient income if carefully expended—Redfield's sister tightened her lips as she vouchsafed this opinion—Isobel, instead of accepting conditions and conforming, outwardly at least, to conventional standards, had merely put on black, not mourning, had established

herself in an uncomfortably small apartment, and spent all of her time, it was said, in playing bridge, recklessly, rumor said, and—if one cared to consider kindly criticism—it might be in a desire to dull remembrance, perhaps remorse.

Generally the most discreet of women, Redfield's sister raised pious, condemning eyes to heaven, as she sighed commiseratingly, in a fashion that infuriated her brother and led him to champion at heart any cause that involved Isobel Winston in condemnation.

"I am sorry to say that she has too many men about to be so recently a widow." The speaker sighed again.

"Naturally, if she plays bridge well, as I have no doubt she does," her brother assured her. "Is there any special person who merits discussion?"

Redfield did not know how eagerly he waited his sister's answer, and he swore softly over the ways of women, as this most feminine of her sex shut her eyes and shook her head, intimating that she did not care to be drawn into a discussion of anything so perniciously unconventional as Isobel Winston's conduct; and this most masculine of men considered it wise to abstain from seeking too obviously the knowledge of the whereabouts of his former sweetheart.

Yet the next afternoon when he met Callender just turning down that same corner into a side street, and noted the careful avoidance of himself, Callender edging evasively to the far side of the walk, Redfield's ironic twist of his lips broadened into a reflective, contemplative grin; and when on the following afternoon he met him again at the same spot and observed him making the same turn into the same cross street, Redfield swung about with a comprehending, illuminated smile broad upon his lips, and when Callender entered an apartment house a little way off the Avenue, his observer, with the light of adventure in his eyes, entered this same congregation of homes.

When the elevator, then on an errand, descended, he stepped in, and murmuring "Mrs. Winston's apartment," he



was wafted upward quite as if he were expected. His pressure upon the bell indicated by the elevator man brought a plain, elderly serving woman to the door in response, and she, too, quite as if he were expected, admitted him and moved away without announcing him.

He found himself in a small apartment, the whole of which seemed to be disclosed before him as he walked toward a large front room at the end of a small hall. He was conscious primarily of a soft, exquisite glow of color, sustained and noticeable, recalling in a sympathetic fashion remembrances, recollections, other scenes, other days, definitely punctuated, however, as he stood in the doorway visualizing the scene before him, by a woman in a smart, thin, black gown who sat with her back to him, at a card table, talking to two men, one of whom was Callender; the other Redfield recalled as Maurice Heyl, a nondescript sort of chap, who could play cards, or anything else he might be called upon to do, with the facility of the professional man of society.

The woman was talking, evidently explaining something about the cards she held in her hands to the other two. Well did Redfield know that voice. Unconquered memory triumphantly welcomed it, as if asking: "Did you dare to think that you might ever forget it?"

So rich, so sweet, in itself, it was, and always had been to him, almost a caress; its individual possession lying in its peculiar vibration which communicated itself to others with incontestable charm. But suddenly she broke off speaking, as if the prescience of another presence had been suggested to her, and turned questioningly toward the intruder. She rose slowly to her feet, unbelievably, uncomprehendingly, and then—the color which had receded from her face swept over it in surprise, and in something else—Redfield could not quite tell what—and she came slowly forward with both hands outstretched to greet him.

"I couldn't—couldn't believe that it was really you! I thought you had be-

come a fixed star on the other side of the globe."

Redfield smiled down into her eyes—the gray-green eyes that he remembered so well, eyes that were like the sea to him—her voice, her personality wrapping about him that old fascination that he thought, that he dreamed that he could throw off. He did not see Callender's morose fury, or Maurice Heyl's curious, questioning, but sharp eyes. He could only see that Isobel Winston was changed and yet unchanged, that she had grown pathetically thin.

"How good of you to look me up!" she said as she turned at Redfield's good-humored, half-significant "Hello, Callender!" and his nod to Heyl, to include them in the welcome to her guest.

"You are here in time to make a fourth for us at bridge, for we've only just heard that the one upon whom we lavished expectations, being a woman, has made excuses, and we were arranging to play short-handed. We play here every afternoon," she explained, and Redfield grinned as she wrinkled up her face with a whimsical smile, recalling, as he did, his sister's hint of the advice of friends eager with endeavors to show her the error of her ways.

He found himself, too, considering her critically, as she stood against a background of golden-brown walls and soft, silken hangings, delicate, ethereal as spring, excepting here and there, before the doors where they were darker, heavier, and more sumptuous; but everywhere was that hint of outdoors, of woodland effects, the soft green and brown tones that merged into notes of deepest yellow like sunlight, or lifted themselves to the high pale tint of tea roses. Isobel, as he knew well, loved the open, and brought it about her in suggestion, at least, wherever she could.

Tall and slender as she was, her dark hair, black with undertones of brown, was banded closely about her head, as if in some penitential mood she had sought to conform to conventionality; once, it had looked to him roughened by the wind, the vigor of outdoors; but her eyes, those gray-green eyes with

their dark lashes and her broad, low brow and square chin were unchanged, and as he scanned them with tender, remembering eyes, the name he had given her rose in a whisper to his lips, "Gypsy."

Back of her, somewhere in her blood, either the Celt or the gypsy, perhaps both, rioted, demanding of her action—if not real, then artificial; but down another line, apparently to create conflict, she had known, undoubtedly, generations of house-bound ancestors who had endowed her with the satin of her skin, that delicately cultivated look, the lovely arms that shone so shapely through the gauzy black of the draperies of her gown, the perfectly modeled hands, and the pose of her head, haughty, imperious. She was, as he saw, the same fascinating complexity, still a study in feminine values. She was so thin, however, that she was almost haggard, and she looked, when her face fell into repose, unsatisfied, restless, disillusioned.

"We are only going to play one rubber," she planned, smiling reassuringly upon them all, "for the game is an old story to us who play often together, and it isn't every day that we have a traveler who has incidentally acquired fame along with achievement, and who can tell us of his adventures by the way."

"Oh, that!" Redfield dismissed the subject of self with a wave of the hand, and then, speaking directly to her in a lowered voice, he said: "I'll tell you anything you want to hear, if you'll have dinner with me somewhere to-night."

The quick lift of the shining eyes—eyes like the sea when it hurries to meet its lover the land—and the slow curl of the short upper lip as it broke into a smile of assent, urged upon him a world of memories, a thrill of remembered delight. To him they two were alone in the room. Redfield forgot that there was any one else in the whole world but just this one woman, and he turned and sat down in the chair she indicated opposite her, unconscious of Heyl's sharp, questioning scrutiny, or Callender's concentrated fury.

"Only one rubber and no stakes," Isobel insisted. "The game is all I care for to-night."

And having drawn the deal, she put the cards down as if oblivious of anything unusual, even Callender's sulks.

Holding ace, eight, seven of hearts; knave of diamonds; ace, five, deuce of clubs; and ace, queen, knave, ten, six, three of spades she made it no-trumps.

Callender, leader, playing with Heyl, held king, queen, knave, ten, nine of hearts; eight, seven, six, five of diamonds; ten, eight, seven of clubs; the seven of spades, and led his king of hearts.

Redfield put down the dummy hand with three, two of hearts; king, ten, nine of diamonds; king, knave, nine, four, three of clubs; and nine, eight, deuce of spades.

Heyl, third hand, held six, five, four of hearts; ace, queen, four, three of diamonds; queen, six of clubs; and king, five, four of spades.

Redfield watched Isobel's keenly observing eyes scanning the board comprehensively, as refusing to hold up the ace, she took the first trick. Then throwing the lead to the dummy by playing a small club in her own hand, she refused the finesse there and took the trick with the king, in order to play her spades to the finesse, in the effort to locate the king. If it lay at her right, the game was hers; if at the left, it was Callender's. She led the nine of spades, and as it took, followed it with the eight, leading again the small spade, the deuce, Heyl's king falling to her ace. Once more she led spades, her queen, and watching carefully the discards, since her spades were established, she led her ace of clubs and caught Heyl's queen, establishing her clubs, losing merely the diamond trick, the last one, and winning a little slam—one hundred and twenty-two points.

"That's enough!" she said, with a sigh as she sat back in her chair, and Heyl, rising, chatted a moment or two about the game, and effaced himself in his adieus. Not so, Callender. He sat still, turning over the cards, his irritability more than usually manifest.

Finally he said, speaking to Mrs. Winston:

"I don't see why you refused that club finesse. It was your play."

"Why, certainly," Isobel laughed, "if I wanted to play your game, not mine. But there was a choice of finesse offered there, and I took the suit that looked to me worth while, using the other merely as a defense, and establishing them both, as it turned out. Moral"—she laughed and there was an undertone of seriousness in her laughter—"look carefully, choose the best suit, not the first or the simplest, but the best, even if you have to take big chances on it as I did with those spades."

Callender continued to grumble, and Redfield, suggesting that he would go down to the office and telephone for a table and a cab, left the room, setting the outer door, by Isobel's direction, with the latch down so that he could enter easily again.

"Come here," said Callender, "I want to talk to you. Sit down."

Isobel sat down opposite him, indifferently, preoccupied, as he saw; but leaning forward, he seized both of her hands as she took up a handful of cards and shuffled them back and forth.

"Send that great hulking fellow away," he demanded. "I hate him."

Isobel stared at him in utter surprise, not taking in the full import of his words; then, as she saw his face, she tried to draw her hands from his grasp, but Callender held them firmly, closely, as he added hurriedly, excitedly:

"What do you suppose I come here for? To play cards?" He threw back his head with an impatient sneer. "I come here because of you—because you encourage me to come—tempt me to come—coax me with your voice, your manner, your ways—and I won't—won't have that old lover of yours about!"

"Let go of my hands," she demanded. "Take your hands off of mine," she cried, with blazing, furious eyes, the outrage of his hands driving her to uncontrollable anger, and thrilling through

her voice. But as the man paid no attention to her, she spoke again coldly, commandingly: "You will take your hands from mine."

But Callender did nothing of the kind, instead he moved them up her arms until he held her shoulders in a grip of iron, and, bringing his face close to hers, demanded again that she send Redfield away, that she consider him, his feelings.

She sprang back quickly in her chair, freeing herself, stared at him a second as she rose to her feet, and then, in a passion of reckless fury, threw the cards, that she held in her hands, full in his face.

"You—you——" she cried breathlessly, as she moved back against the golden-brown wall seeking support, her dark hair and still, cold face outlining her a figure, or a dark shadow, of revenge. She was outraged beyond words, her gypsy blood swirling through her veins uncontrollably.

As she stood gazing at him in horror, every emotion of which a woman is capable swept across her in waves of feeling, picturing themselves in her pose, her color, the moving lines and shadows upon her face. Her hand she held about her throat as if easing the constriction there; then, after what seemed to the man watching her an interminable time, she let her arms fall, contempt in their very pose.

"I dreamed that you could learn to play a good game of bridge, that I could teach you," she said wearily, disgustingly. "Such utter foolishness on my part, when you play the game of life as badly as you do. It is you—men like you"—her voice rose again, she was the gypsy now, untamed, untamable, reckless, free—"who, having no feelings yourself, try to find out how much you can make a woman feel, and I—I allowed you about"—there was bitter self-contempt in the voice—"because I love your wife." She shuddered. "To such as you vanity is your only asset. You never think of a woman as an individual, a being; she is merely a card with which to play your game of self."

Callender's eyes glittered like an ani-

mal's as her words, beating like frozen rain on ice, cut his ears. But Isobel, when she stopped speaking, drew a breath of what sounded like utter weariness, utter despair; then, standing still for a moment, listening apparently to an inner voice, a thought, a memory, she lifted her gaze. It seemed to carry her far away, far from the moody, glittering eyes of the man before her who would have held her. The heavy silken hanging at the door wavered against her as if stirred by a wind from some unseen source, an open door, perhaps. She turned her ear toward it; then her eyes fell upon the man standing by the table, and her face changed.

Swiftly she crossed the space between them, interposing herself between the table and the open door, between him and the door, shielding him, protecting him, some divine maternal instinct stirring her, thrilling through that wonderful voice of hers, low now, as she spoke to him, almost appealing in its demand upon him.

"Let me tell you," she said, and there were sharp notes of self-condemnation now in that voice. "Do you know why I set myself to master that game, to play it as well as I could, to learn the things that any one must who plays it well—why I tried to help you to do so?" The gypsy was merged in the woman now, a woman who had lived and suffered. "It was because I—had failed in the game of life that I had set myself to play. You know that—Jack and I—were not happy together. And afterward—oh, I suffered! People bothered me so—they wanted me to go into mourning—shut myself away from the world—as if that could change matters—to shut myself away from the good, glad world, and—mourn." She threw out her hands with a forlorn little gesture. "I did concede something. I put on black"—she held up an edge of her gown with a wistful sigh—"and shut myself off from general society, but," imperiously, "why should I mourn? I was so unutterably glad to be rid of the past, of my past, the things that I hated

in my life; but I owed something to life, something to myself. I was to blame as much as Jack for the fact that we did not get along. I couldn't shirk that, or change it, but I could pay my debt to that fact, pay my debt to Jack, by learning the things that might have helped us had we known them, the things that every one should know, the things that people know in every game, it seems to me, but life—the other person's point of view, the other person's rights, self-control, unselfishness, observation, intuition, if it can be developed; and it's all there in bridge—to play that one must know all those things. Look at that game we've just played!"

Isobel was now the cultivated woman of the world; now the woman who can dominate a social situation, suave, fine. She moved aside, disclosing to Callender Redfield standing leaning against the heavy silken curtain at the door.

"I had to use finesse to win that game, not the obvious finesse, but the more subtle, more dangerous one, and I made not only one of those suits, but both, by using one of them as a defense."

Her face softened as she watched that of the man before her; something exceedingly sweet swept over it, as if through a generosity so fine, so unselfish, she could obliterate the mistakes that an ordinary woman would consider irretrievable. She held out her hand graciously.

"Going?" she questioned in a voice that was an irresistible charm. "Give my love to Nina."

"We were discussing the game of bridge," she explained, turning to Redfield, as Callender, muttering "Good-by," passed from the room.

Redfield, coming into the room, took her face in his hands and turned it to the light. Upon it lingered still the lines written there by a supreme test, and in the eyes—those gray-green eyes like the sea—there shone a spirit freed of judgment.

"There is only one game worth playing," he said. "Yours and mine."

# My Confidential Friend



87

## Margaret Busbee Shipp

January 6th, 1910.



WAS so excited over being maid of honor and the crush at the reception kept me so busy that not until Grace's mother whispered that it was time for her to put on her traveling dress did I realize that the end had come. I just clung to Grace a minute, and she held me as fast. An elderly man who had been talking to me remarked: "What a beautiful friendship! Blonde and brunette!"

To have our love put on so low a plane as a mere contrast in type was unbearable, and I turned to him and said: "Poor worldling!"

He looked as amazed as if a lamb had suddenly barked at him, and as Grace went upstairs with Mrs. Hooper, a man drew my arm through his.

"I am going to take you to get something cool," he said.

But he didn't; he took me out to the little place screened off by long-leaf pines, and I hardly managed to get there before I burst out crying. He must have seen it coming. I sobbed until I felt that an explanation was due him, and I told him that I was facing absolute loneliness. I explained that I had lived at the university town where dad was professor of Greek until we came here a month ago because dad wanted to give all his time to some important work. He said that all the graduates of the university honored dad as the purest type of scholar the State had produced.

"But I haven't anybody to confide in

now that Grace is going away," I went on, "for dad is always busy in his study, and when I can make him listen, he takes things so seriously."

"Things like what?"

"Like boys making love to me," I explained. "There was a law student whom we thought in love with Grace, and when it proved to be me, I hated to talk to Grace about it because it seemed like boasting, so I went to dad, and he said: 'The impudent young puppy! I will tell him to stop annoying you!' It was difficult to make him understand that I *liked* it. You see, I have been here to visit Grace, and she has spent all her vacations with me, and now just as I came here to live, she marries and goes to Georgia! If you've ever had a devoted friend marry and have felt that you couldn't talk freely to him any more because he'd tell his wife, you can understand how lonely I am now. And all the students I know best have—nearly all of them, that is, who—"

I stopped short, and felt myself turning pink in the hateful way I do, but he understood.

"Of course that would debar them from being impartial confidants," he remarked thoughtfully. "Would you consider me? You can rely on my silence, and I'll vouch for my interest."

"I—I hadn't thought of a middle-aged person," I admitted. "I am afraid my confidences would sound frivolous to you."

Mr. Channing said that, though he confessed to thirty-one years, he re-

called his youthful emotions well enough to be sympathetic, and in the end we made a compact.

To-day he sent me this plump morocco volume, so that when he was out of town and I had an irresistible impulse to talk of intimate things, I could write them down here. I find that I like doing it—evidently a taste which I inherited from darling dad and his notebooks.

January 10th.

Mr. Channing called last evening, and even before he shook hands he exclaimed: "I see that you have something to tell me!"

That was very discerning, for I had received a letter from Herbert King that day. He graduates at the university this year. I started to read it to him, but Mr. Channing gave an exclamation when he saw that it was seventeen pages.

"Perhaps it would be fairer to the other fellow just to give me an outline of its contents? We won't call them by their real names, either, but run down the alphabet with them. Suppose we call the first man Adams; shall we?"

So I told him how Herbert "Adams" had been my devoted friend. I had worn his fraternity pin, and he had once said to me, most beautifully: "You are more to me than my sisters by blood, for that is the merest accident of birth, while you are my sister by the deliberate choice of my manhood."

Now that I've gone away he misses me so dreadfully he realizes that he cares for me in a still deeper way. Mr. Channing wanted to know what I had answered. Of course I wouldn't hurt Herbert's feelings for anything, so I wrote that I would tell him at Commencement, and in the meantime to be sure to go to see the Kenans and the Faisons every week. You see he likes Fanny Kenan tremendously, and if he saw a lot of her, by June he would probably be in love with her, and I shouldn't have to hurt his feelings at all. My confidential friend entirely approved of this course, and we had a long talk about all sorts of things.

January 19th.

The new governor was once a prize pupil of dad's, and his wife has asked me to be in the receiving line with her niece, at their first reception at the mansion. I was with their party the night of the inaugural ball, and the papers next day spoke of me as "the debutante who was the unrivaled belle of the occasion." Everybody is so nice to me that I begin to feel as much at home here as I did at the dear old university.

March 12th.

I've had the best time the last two months that I ever had in my life! I've been to parties, cotillions, and informal dances galore. Mr. Channing says the reason I have neglected my diary is that every time "I take my pen in hand" I have to thank somebody or other for flowers. Mr. Birch is especially attentive. He is quite old, older even than my confidential friend, and he has what the novels call "graying hair," though I think it looks rather mottled. He leads the germans, and rather arbitrates all social matters, and he is very, very cynical. Perhaps I was right when I called him a worldling that first night.

March 23rd.

So much happens, and it is so good to be alive! Who would have thought that Mr. Birch would? But he *did*, and I was so excited about it that I couldn't wait for Mr. Channing to come, and I telephoned to his office.

"It's B!" I cried, when he came to the receiver. "Oh, do hurry and come; you'll never guess!"

"I'll be there in four minutes," he replied, and in that time his runabout was at the door.

"It's a real B; it's Mr. Birch," I began. "I'm obliged to tell you the real name or you won't realize how thrilling it was. The only trouble is that it has spoiled me for sophomores' love-making forever! I realize now that theirs was very crude and obvious; they tell you everything, while Mr. Birch leaves you to infer so much, and it seems as if he doesn't want to tell you at all, as if it was just wrung from him!"



"He ought to be an adept by this time," Mr. Channing muttered, and he didn't seem to be as sympathetic as he was about Herbert.

"Now, Herbert calls me 'a star-eyed angel,' but Mr. Birch—what do you suppose?—says I'm 'cryptic,' 'subtle,' and 'a consummate little actress.'"

"His descriptions would be equally applicable to a year-old baby," Mr. Channing growled.

It provoked me, and I flashed back: "I know I'm only eighteen, but Mr. Birch treats me as if I were as old as—as Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell, and it's so encouraging."

"By the way"—he had quite a queer look—"I understand that you had another 'B' in train at the Stewarts' ball. I heard Bruce-Maxwell at the club next day declare that he had enjoyed a debutante for the first time in years."

"He danced with me a great deal." Then I burst forth with the whole truth. "As you are my intimate friend, I don't mind saying that I don't think it was at all tactful in him. You see, there were lots of young men who wanted to dance with me, and Mr. Bruce-Maxwell would insist on giving me all his leads, and he actually got rid of my own partner, Rob Hester, and took me in to supper himself. I tried to be polite, of course, but I hated to waste time at a dance talking to an old married person."

Mr. Channing threw back his head and shouted.

"Bruce has been regarded as the most dangerously attractive man in our community for so long that I imagine it was a downright delight to be treated like 'an old married person.'"

"He sent me the most gorgeous orchids yesterday. I knew, of course, it must be a mistake that Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell's card wasn't in with them, too, so I addressed my note of thanks to them both, and began it: 'My dear friends.'"

Mr. Channing looked as if he were going to laugh again, then he changed his mind and lifted my hand and kissed it. He has an odd, chivalrous fashion

of doing that. I rather like it. It makes me feel like a princess in a book.

April 3rd.

People are so queer. There is an unattractive young man here, with a reddish-purplish face and hideous hair, so stiff and sandy. He dances awkwardly and doesn't talk about a thing but automobiles. Lately he has taken to sending me ten-pound boxes of candy, as if I were a wholesale house. Yesterday afternoon he called, and while he was there, Grace's mother came in. I said frankly:

"Mr. Ellerton, I want to talk about Grace, so I am going to send you away. Three people can't talk with any satisfaction, can they? And you can come again more easily than Mrs. Hooper, because she isn't strong."

Well, Mrs. Hooper looked perfectly aghast, and began to insist upon his staying. He laughed in his kind, hearty way, and said:

"Let her alone, Mrs. Hooper. She is pretty enough to afford to talk the straight truth. I'll be back again, probably before she wants me."

When he went out, Mrs. Hooper asked as solemnly as the catechism:

"Doris, don't you know that is John K. Ellerton's son, the richest man in the State? What would your father say to your behavior?"

I was frankly puzzled by her manner. "As dad doesn't have to ask alms, I don't see what his having money has to do with us. He comes here so often that I am tired of talking to him, anyway. Do tell me about Grace."

Mrs. Hooper looked as interested as darling dad does over his *Æschylus*.

"I wonder what Nina Bruce-Maxwell will say when she learns of that? Nina must have an axe sharpened for you already because of Mr. Channing."

I suppose I looked as mystified as I felt, for she went on to explain:

"Nina has been trying to get Mr. Channing into her train ever since her marriage. But he is too busy, or too indifferent. This winter he has given more time to social matters than ever before, and every one declares it is be-

cause of you. You have certainly had a wonderfully successful first season, my dear. There's something piquant in your position, too, for your father is about as much of a chaperon as one of the books in his library. Of course Birch isn't a marrying man, but his approval gives a girl a certain stamp; and you have a veritable bodyguard among the younger set of dancing men, though I think you flirt with Robert Hester rather too openly. Mr. Channing, though the best parti here, taking everything into consideration, is absolutely cold-blooded, and I don't think he will marry. Still his attentions count, and the Bruce-Maxwells will probably take you into their set, if things go on this way."

But I interrupted her.

"I can't understand what you mean about Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell trying to get Mr. Channing into her train *after* she was married?"

I raised my voice in my excitement, and just then Mr. Channing himself came into the room.

"I am so glad to be in time to hear your elucidation, Mrs. Hooper," he said pleasantly.

She never made it, however, but stammered out something about my being such a child.

"I agree with you," he replied, and his voice was gentle and hard all at once, though it doesn't sound possible. "Such a clear-eyed, innocent child that I should think all the motherhood in all womankind would rise to protect and shelter her. Instead, they offer her a bite from the apple of the tree of knowledge, and are not even careful to observe whether or not the particular fruit in question has been first handled by the father of lies."

Mrs. Hooper left soon afterward, in a sort of apologetic flutter, and we never did have our talk about Grace. Mr. Channing came to where I was standing and took both my hands in his and drew me near him, and we stood there silent for a while, and I had that sense of being defended and sheltered that his friendship always gives me.

"You can protect yourself from the men, but I cannot protect you from the women," was all he said, but he looked tired and troubled.

I told him all of our conversation, about John K. Ellerton's son and all.

"Don't you think Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell is lovely?" I asked.

"Very," he returned absently. "Don't you?"

"I think she is the very prettiest woman I ever saw in my life."

"That's a fair exchange for Bruce-Maxwell's opinion of you."

At the memory of that I drew away my hands, and a queer lump came in my throat. For the other evening Mr. Bruce-Maxwell had appealed to Mr. Channing: "Isn't she a regular Greuze girl? The same delicacy of coloring, the same transparent, wistful loveliness, the same look of divine unworldliness."

And he, Mr. Channing, my best friend, had merely responded:

"One can stand before a Greuze picture in the National and discuss it—because it cannot hear. I don't think I can treat Miss Grey quite so imperdonably."

Yet the fact remains that of every man I have met this winter, he is the only one who has never told me that he likes the way I look. I don't blame him. I think it surprising that anybody can care much about blue eyes. Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell's are large and dark.

April 12th.

Mr. Channing has been away on business and I have not seen him for two days. As he had telephoned that he would be up late in the afternoon, I cut short my ride with Mr. Ellerton in his big new car, and reached home just after he came.

"What's up now?" he asked. "From the tone of your voice over the phone, I knew something had occurred. Bobby Hester been making love again?"

I refused to discuss anything so frivolous, and announced:

"I am in the Bruce-Maxwell set!"

"God forbid!" he muttered, as I handed him the dainty note from Mrs.

Bruce-Maxwell, asking me to spend the week-end at Fairfields.

"I told the girls about it at Daisy's luncheon this afternoon, and they all think I am the luckiest person alive. They say Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell never has young girls out there, and it's always so gay and bright, with people coming and going, as they do in English novels."

"Have you answered her note?"

"Of course I wrote at once I should be perfectly delighted to come."

"Did you ask your father?"

"I told him about it, but he merely said: 'Be sure to take overshoes, daughter; April weather is uncertain.'"

"You said over the telephone that you wished to ask my advice about something. Why didn't you wait?"

"Oh, it wasn't about that. It was something else. I won a philopena from Mr. Birch, and to-day he sent me an exquisite fan and this little verse with it. You see how he calls me 'sweet-heart' and names like that? If I wouldn't let him do it in a note in prose, does it make any difference because it is in poetry?"

"As your friend and confidential adviser, I can assure you that poetic license doesn't extend to calling a dear little girl 'names' when she doesn't like it. But I am thinking of this Fairfields visit."

He went out to the telephone in the hall, and called up Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell.

"Is it too late for me to retrieve myself? You have been gracious enough to give me an invitation to Fairfields and to leave the date open. May I come Saturday? No, thank you very much, but I can't get away a day earlier. In my own car. That is very good of you, Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell, but I deserve every word you said about my unsociability. You are very kind to let me break my bad habits. Thank you again. Good-by."

When he came back into the library, I knew he was going to kiss my hand even before he did.

"I deserve something. I've declined uncounted invitations to Fairfields, and

now I deliberately invite myself. You're going to motor out Friday?"

"Yes, I'm going with Mr. Ellerton. He spends every week-end there."

"John K. Ellerton's son?" he quoted in Mrs. Hooper's voice.

I am so stupid about expressing things that I can't explain how nice his own voice sounded when he said:

"Good-by, little girl. If anything perplexes you while you're at Fairfields, come to me, dear."

Fairfields, April 17th.

I can't realize that it is only Sunday morning, for so much happens all the time here that it seems a week since I came Friday morning. Such happy hours, too, with every moment filled with fun and laughter. It is a big, beautiful place, and there are motors and saddle horses, and an artificial lake with boats on it. There are lots of people here, most of them friends of the Bruce-Maxwells from the North, but I'm the only young girl.

Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell is so fascinating that the men crowd around her just as if she wasn't married, and she has the prettiest clothes I ever dreamed of. She is an angel to have me here, for I know I seem silly, and I can't understand what they are talking about half the time. This morning I've been having a glorious gallop over the hills with Mr. Bruce-Maxwell. He is so clever, and I should like to be with him if he didn't call me "Little Greuze Girl," and "Lily Maid," and all sorts of names that sound as if I were still in the nursery. And he has a careless way of touching me. Of course it is accidental or thoughtless, and being married himself, he naturally has a kindly interest in young people. Only it is funny how I hate for people to touch me. Once he pinched my cheek. Another time he put his hand on my hair; and he said I jumped as if he had hit me with a croquet mallet.

I have never tasted champagne, and at dinner the first evening Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell said:

"Isn't there anything else you'd like,

Doris, if you don't care for champagne?"

I thought a moment, and then I said: "Once I tried some apollinaris."

They laughed at me, they always do. Saturday night there was a dance. Mr. Birch had sent me American Beauty roses, but they are such showy, buxom flowers I do not love them. Mr. Channing had sent snowdrops—the whitest little things! I never saw so many. I wore the simplest white frock. I have because it seemed to suit the flowers. When I came into the ballroom, my confidential friend gave an odd gasp when he saw me—I hope it meant he liked the way I looked—and Mr. Birch said he couldn't find fault with me for slighting his roses, because no one could find fault with perfection.

Mr. Bruce-Maxwell danced with me a great deal. It must have pleased his wife to see him so thoughtful to an insignificant guest like me, because she would smile at me when she passed us in the waltz. She has tired eyes, they do not smile, but her mouth and teeth are so lovely that her laughter is like a bright flash.

It was after midnight when we sat down to supper, and I wondered what dad would think of my being in a ball dress Sunday morning. I said I wished it was nine o'clock and that we had three more hours to dance in, and Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell said something about the blessedness of youth.

"But you are young, too," I said. "I think you have the best time of anybody I ever knew. You dance and ride so wonderfully, you are so beautiful, and you have such a delightful home and such becoming clothes and so many beaus!"

"Good gracious, child, what a climax!" she laughed. "Wait until you're a safe, married party, and I'll have to resign in your favor."

"No," I said quite sadly, "I have a presentiment that the kind of husband I shall marry won't like for anybody to be in love with me but himself."

They laughed at me again, and somebody rose and toasted Mr. Bruce-Max-

well on the strength of it, but he raised his glass to me instead, and said: "I give you *l'enfant terrible*!"

An amazing thing happened as I started to go upstairs to bed. Mr. Ellerton had walked with me to the foot of the stairs. He said:

"I will be the kind of husband who won't want any other man to love you. Will you let me be?"

I was so utterly astonished I couldn't say a word for a moment, and he added:

"I could give you everything in the world you want."

"No, I don't think you could," I stammered, "for I am not sure what I want most, but I think it's something you couldn't give me."

"Marry me, Doris. I promise to make you happy; I promise to be true to you."

"You say that as if it were a New Year's resolution."

He looked as guilty as if I had read to the very bottom of his mind. I saw Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell saying good night to some one at the end of the corridor, so I shook my head and started up the steps. When I reached the upper landing I turned and looked down, and Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell was giving Mr. Ellerton the mauve orchid from her bodice. She was very beautiful as she stood looking up at him, but his face looked drawn and queer.

I hardly know whether it is worth telling Mr. Channing, for Mr. Ellerton didn't make love to me at all, merely asked me to marry him. I must confess that, though I have had a whole winter out, I cannot entirely understand men.

April 18th. Home.

How precious home is and darling dad! I don't ever want to go back to Fairfields—somehow I don't feel at home there, though everything is made so easy for everybody.

After dinner at Fairfields last night I was in a small room that opened on the loggia, talking with Mr. Bruce-Maxwell, Mr. Birch, and Mr. Channing.

The moon had risen early, and as we looked through the open arches into the night, I quoted:

"The moon was afloat,  
Like a golden boat,  
In the sea-blue depths of the sky,  
When——"

I stopped short, and felt myself blushing.

"Do go on," Mr. Birch encouraged. "It must be a very naughty bit of *vers de société* to make you blush so adorably."

"Please finish it."

Mr. Channing's tone was more like a command, so I faltered out:

"When the Miller of Dee,  
With his children three,  
On his fat, red horse rode by."

It sounded so nurserylike that I hung my head, and Mr. Channing said to Mr. Birch:

"Did you actually think she knew something she was ashamed to repeat?"

"A Lit of Swinburne, perhaps?" suggested Mr. Bruce-Maxwell, laughing.

Eager to reinstate myself in their good opinion, I said: "Oh, I do know Swinburne a little. He is my favorite poet."

This time my confidential friend was the one to look surprised.

"Haven't you confused the name?" he asked, while the other men laughed.

"No. Dad gave me a book of his poems about children. I think they are the tenderest ever written, and I know many of them by heart. Don't you remember the one about a child's laughter? The lines seem actually to *ripple*. Only some one who loved children dearly could have written:

"A baby's feet, like seashells pink,  
Might tempt, should Heaven seem meet,  
An Angel's lips to kiss, we think,  
A baby's feet.  
Like rose-hued sea flowers toward the  
heat  
They stretch and spread and wink  
Their ten soft buds that part and meet."

"Can't you almost feel the baby in your lap, and see the little pink toes stretched to the fire?"

I broke off; I have grown so afraid

of being laughed at. But this time none of them did.

"I greatly prefer your Miller of Dee's nice, bourgeois moon to Byron's, with a devil in it for mischief," remarked Mr. Birch. "Shall we go out on the loggia where we can get a better view?"

The other men protested, but Mr. Birch said Mr. Bruce-Maxwell and Mr. Channing had divided my afternoon between them, and to him alone not a crumb had been vouchsafed. So we went out and found chairs in a deep recess. The world looked very lovely in the half light, and Mr. Birch began to make love to me. I do not care for it nearly as much as I did at first. I like the sophomores better, because they don't keep bending over you and adjusting your wrap.

"Strange rumors reach me concerning the Orchid Lady, the Golden Knight, and the Lily Maid. What are you going to tell me about it?"

Of course I knew this foolishness meant Mrs. Bruce-Maxwell, who always wears orchids, Mr. Ellerton, and myself. It irritated me.

"I haven't any confidences to make. I don't tell things to anybody—except to Mr. Channing," I added truthfully.

"So the chevalier *sans peur et sans reproche* enters the field? Be careful, little girl! You may burn your pretty fingers, but he is asbestos proof against the divine fire. I'll admit he may be a strong trump if you and Nina are to play against each other."

"I don't know what you're talking about," I returned crossly. "Except that I don't think we ought to discuss our hostess."

"Shall I talk about *you*, instead of these tiresome fellows who are so appreciative of your charms? Shall I tell you that as you lean back in the moonlight, you look so ethereal, so flower-like,

"A man might venture all earthly bliss  
And all his worldly wealth for this,  
To lose his whole heart in one kiss  
Upon her perfect lips."

With that he put his arm around me! It all happened in a flash. I felt his arm about me, his face near me—and I

did—what I always did as a child. When I fought, I never used to scratch or slap the other children; I always pulled their hair. With the same instinct of self-protection, I jerked at his hair with all my might and main, and then I screamed—for it came off in my hand!

In a moment Mr. Channing and Mr. Bruce-Maxwell rushed from the adjoining room. There I stood holding Mr. Birch's graying hair, and right on top of his head was a round bald place.

"I thought I had scalped him," I sobbed.

"Literally or figuratively?" asked Mr. Bruce-Maxwell, with a broad grin.

I held out the hair. "Take it," I cried.

He did, but oh, you never saw anybody look so funny as he did, trying to be nonchalant, with that patch of hair in his hand. I have learned since that it is called a "scratch," and that not even his best friends knew he wore one.

"I think I need a B. & S., Bruce," he said. "I find kindergarten games rather exhausting."

Mr. Bruce-Maxwell looked at me as I stood there, gulping back the tears.

"Perhaps, Birch, we have both forgotten how many years lie between us and—snowdrops," he said. His voice was very kind.

He slipped his arm through Mr. Birch's and walked away with him.

Then I did an inexplicable thing. The moment they were gone, and I felt myself free from that dreadful man, I flung myself upon my poor friend, and cried until the lapel of his coat was all damp. I told him I didn't like for Mr. Bruce-Maxwell to call me pet names, or for Mr. Ellerton to talk about marrying me, and that I wanted to go home to dad. He patted and soothed me, and when I was comforted at last, he said:

"Now, Doris, tell me exactly what Birch did to frighten you."

"Why," I said, "he put his arm around me!"

I suppose I said it in a horrified way, for he just barely smiled, and then—all at once—it swept over me for the first time that I was in Mr. Channing's

arms, and that I had fairly run into them.

"Oh!" I stammered. "I beg your pardon! I didn't mean to. Please don't think I am *fast*!"

He held me very close to him a moment, and then let me go, and said quietly:

"You are too tired and too shaken now to hear just what I think of you. But you leave Fairfields in the morning, thank Heaven, and to-morrow night in your own home I'll tell you everything. In the meantime, you will trust your friend to understand you? You know he could not be so evil as to misinterpret the precious impulse which humbles and exalts him?"

Then he kissed my hands, and we went back to the others. They were playing bridge at three or four tables, though it was Sunday, and I said good night to my hostess and slipped off to my room.

I was so thankful to get back to darling dad this morning that he said: "Why, little daughter, one would think you had returned from a transatlantic journey."

"Fairfields is even farther than that from you, dad," I replied, and wondered if Mr. Birch would call that "cryptic."

But oh, I am so ashamed, so ashamed! For, though I cannot remember clearly, I think I flung myself into Mr. Channing's arms, and it seemed so perfectly natural to be there. I didn't realize it was exacting too much of a friend.

April 19th.

He came just at "blind-man's holiday," that hour, especially sweet in springtime, just before the lights are lit. When I went into the room I was so abashed I could not look up, I could only remember my forward, unmaidenly conduct. But this time he ran toward me, and held me in his arms, *entirely* of his own free will.

"You are not afraid of me?" he kept whispering, as if it was so wonderful he couldn't altogether believe it. "You do not mind that I can feel your dear



heart beating against mine? You are not afraid or angry or sorry because I love you?"

I trembled, but I did not wish to draw away.

"But how can you be sure you love me," I asked, "when you do not even like the way I look?"

His low laughter was as tender as his voice. "I couldn't bribe you with pretty speeches, dearest. Not with flattery; not with gifts; I had to trust alone to the power of the love I give you to draw you to me. You did not know at Christmas, when I sent you a bunch of snowdrops, that I chose for you, too, a string of pearls and put it away with a prayer for the blessed day to come when I might clasp it around your white, white throat. Have you never divined that I think you the most exquisite, the most spotless, the most beautiful thing created in this world?"

It made me so radiantly happy that he must have read it in my face, for he kissed me. At least I'm glad I didn't do that first. But he did, on my eyes, my lips, my brow, my hair, as if each was so dear, so dear to him. I felt as if all the happiness in all the world was beating in my heart. He told me a thousand things, so precious and so sweet that they are in my memory for always. Then he said we were to be married soon, and I asked him when, and he said in about a month; and I asked if he couldn't possibly wait six weeks, because I should have so many

things to do, and he was very obstinate about agreeing to this. He said he had wanted me for his wife when he first saw me the night of Grace's wedding, and more and more every day since.

"As you opened every corner of your heart to me, and I saw its divine youth and innocence, I felt myself wholly unworthy. But at Fairfields, when you came straight to me, unconscious as a homing bird, I felt that your need for me to shelter you might be as real as the cry of my heart for you."

When we went in to tell dad about it, Mr. Channing said:

"I want to have Doris to myself for a while, in peace and selfishness, so we plan to go abroad as soon as we are married, and we want you to come with us as far as Athens, and leave you there for an Attic summer. Unless you will promise this, I'm afraid I can't coax Doris to 'some unsequestered isle in far-off seas.'"

"It has long been a wish of mine to go," dad said.

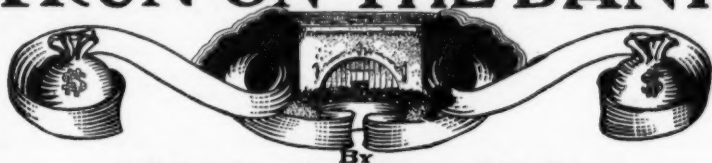
"People will call you a fairy prince," I added. "You make dreams come true."

May 31st.

But they didn't. Instead, they called me "a little schemer who had made the match of the year"! We don't care. The days are too busy and too happy except just to live each golden moment as it comes. To-morrow, with June, and roses, and sunshine, dawns our wedding day!



# A RUN ON THE BANK



**Alden Arthur Knipe**

**R**IVERSIDE, Cherokee County, Iowa, is a little town set down in a prairie, and there is no river, not even a creek, within fifty miles of it. The most recent census gives the population as eight hundred and seventy-three, but the inhabitants of the village claim an even thousand. Perhaps they count a portion of the live stock with which the whole county is intimately associated.

Scattered along each side of the principal street of Riverside there is the usual array of composite "business enterprises" presided over by "merchants." Of these the general store is the chief, and behind its littered counters Abe Johnson dispenses his wares with a bucolic cheerfulness that knows no partiality. A highly ornate drug store, with a side line of "optical goods," deals chiefly in patent medicines for man and beast; while carrying on a brisk, albeit an illicit, trade in cheap whisky. There are also a book store, a barber shop, a farm-implement "emporium," and various other places of business that lead a more or less precarious existence.

Then there is the bank, which until recently occupied a dingy-looking frame building, pierced here and there by dirty, curtainless windows. A weather-beaten sign hung over the door and bore in rusty gold letters the words:

**WILLIAM SHIPLEY & CO.,**

*General Bankers.*

Who constituted the "Co." in this firm was a matter for much specula-

tion in the beginning; but Abe Johnson's opinion was shortly accepted as the true explanation.

"Old Bill," said Abe, referring to Mr. Shipley, "just tacked on that 'Co.' to make it sound regular, havin' dealin's with parties up in Chicago that don't like doin' business with individuals."

As a matter of fact, Abe Johnson himself was the silent partner in the concern; but it was deemed advisable to keep his connection a profound secret. The storekeeper, a centre of gossip, could more easily influence public opinion if his personal interest in the community's financial affairs was unknown.

For twenty-five years Mr. Shipley had managed the bank himself; but, when his son James returned from finishing his education in an Eastern university, he turned it over to him and devoted himself exclusively to raising various kinds of fancy stock and to nursing the Republican machine of Cherokee County which he ruled with a rod of iron.

The people of Riverside watched young Shipley suspiciously for a week or two after his return. They concluded at length, however, that his college training "hadn't spoiled him none," and that after all "Old Bill was really boss, though he let the kid think he was runnin' the whole show."

James Shipley took up the work of the bank reluctantly. He would have preferred to test his talents in a less restricted field, but there was another consideration. He wanted to marry Mary Lewis, and to that end he was willing to stay in Riverside.

In due time he confessed to Mary that he loved her, and she admitted an attachment for him.

"Only, Jimmy," said Mary, "I don't believe father will give his consent, and I can't marry you without that."

"I'll see your father at once," said the young man confidently, and straightway made his wishes known to "Hank" Lewis with a directness that was characteristic.

Hank was equally straightforward.

"I don't know nothin' about you, and I don't want to; but I've knowed your father fer nigh thirty-five years, and no daughter of mine is a-goin' to marry no offspring of hisn. Not while I'm livin', that is."

James Shipley then went to his own father. He knew, of course, that there had been a feud of years' standing between the two men; everybody in Cherokee County knew it, but he, like others, had no very clear knowledge of the reason for it.

"Well," began Mr. Shipley, leaning back in his chair, "it comes to a pretty considerable of a story to tell the hull of it seein' as it started about thirty years ago and hasn't stopped to breathe since; but it all started over a couple of hogs that Hank sold me. They didn't die of cholera, like he thought they was goin' to, and fattened up right smart. I sold 'em at a good profit, but I ain't takin' no credit fer it. Hank had every right to think he'd stuck me, and when he found he hadn't you can understand he felt considerable discouraged. It riled him so that he's been tryin' to get back at me one way or 'nother ever since."

"I wish the old hogs had died or never been born!" said young Shipley, with emphasis.

His father looked at him quizzically.

"Why, he ain't interferin' with you, is he?"

"He is," returned the other promptly. "He refuses to let Mary marry me."

"And how about the gal?" asked Mr. Shipley, with a shade of anxiety in his voice.

"She won't think of it without her father's consent," replied the son.

"Well," drawled Mr. Shipley, with a dry smile, "that's the first good turn old Hank Lewis ever done me. I'm goin' 'round and shake his hand."

"What do you mean by that?" demanded Jimmy.

"This here," said the older man, rising to his feet, "it ain't part of my duty to dictate who you shall marry. No, sir! I wouldn't have stood it from my dad at your age, and I guess I'm right in thinkin' you won't—and I admire you fer it; but the more things I see in the way of your takin' on with any of Hank Lewis' progeny fer life the better I like it. I don't say you shan't marry her, mind, if you can do it—and I'm thinkin' you'll try. But though I never done nothin' to please Hank that I can remember, I'll do all I can fer him in this. I'm goin' to see him. Yes, sir, and thank him! He'll be surprised, I guess; but I'm a peaceable man, and he ought to be obliged to me, findin' me agreein' with him fer the first time in thirty-five years."

Young Shipley tried to persuade his father not to meddle in an affair that was entirely without his jurisdiction, but the elder man went off without more words to find his ancient enemy.

Their interview was brief and to the point. Hank Lewis followed Mr. Shipley out of his store, vowing in the strongest terms that he'd get even if it took all the money he possessed.

"You're a perverse old devil, Hank," retorted Mr. Shipley, with a broad grin. "I'm a peaceable man, and this here's a thing I'm more'n willin' to back you up in. You don't want my boy to marry your gal. Well, neither do I. Rather see him dead, as I've been tellin' you, but you always was a cranky critter." And Mr. Shipley went off chuckling, while Lewis shook his fist at the retreating back and reiterated his vow of vengeance.

Not long after this Hank Lewis' scheme for retaliation upon the Shipley family took definite form. An ornate building of glazed yellow brick with gray-stone facings began to rear its attractive front and dominate the main street of Riverside. As it neared

completion its purpose became obvious. Hank Lewis was preparing to start a rival bank.

And there was nothing visionary in his plan. The people of Riverside, and these included the farmers within a radius of fifteen miles, were hardly prosperous enough to support two banks, and this new concern with its modern building and highly polished brass fixtures would attract many depositors. It was a foregone conclusion that sooner or later one or other of the two institutions would be forced to close its doors. It would be a fight from the start, with much of the advantage with Hank Lewis.

Young Shipley was worried.

"There's only one thing to do," he told his father. "We'll have to build a bigger bank than Hank's."

"That ain't such a bad scheme," his father agreed, "only it hardly seems worth while to fight. I'm a peaceable man, and it don't hardly pay to lend money for a paltry seven per cent. fer the sake of handlin' deposits between seasons if you have to struggle fer it."

And from this position Mr. Shipley would not be moved. If Hank wanted to run the town bank he could have that pleasure so far as old Bill was concerned.

"We'll find somethin' else fer you to do," he told Jimmy, but that young man shook his head doggedly and reiterated the fact that he wanted to keep the bank and that something should be done to hold the depositors.

"See here," said his father suddenly, "if you give up this nonsense about Hank Lewis' gal, I'll back you up in any scheme you've a mind to."

"That I won't do!" declared young Shipley positively.

"Very well, then," declared Mr. Shipley, "have it your own way, but don't come to me to help you out of a hole. And let me tell you this: Hank Lewis' concern will put you out of business in six months."

"Don't you believe it," the son retorted. "Before six months are up I'll be married to Mary Lewis." And he went off, vowing to beat both these

stubborn old men and win the girl he loved in spite of them.

As the new bank neared completion another element entered into the situation. Hank Lewis, with obvious intention, began a campaign intended to discredit the financial standing of the Shipley institution. At first people were inclined to laugh at Hank's hints, but one or two political enemies of old Bill's helped to create a suspicion, and in a little while there was a good deal of discussion of the matter, especially on Saturdays, when the farmers from the surrounding country came into town for supplies.

Of course, Abe Johnson, the centre of this gossip at the general store, kept Jimmy informed of the trend of public sentiment. His assurances that the old bank was perfectly solvent did much to allay the uneasiness that Hank was creating; nevertheless, many people made no secret of the fact that they were only waiting for the new bank to open its doors to put their money in it.

Jimmy Shipley saw plainly that something must be done if he wished to save his business. Moreover, if he did save it he would at the same time make the success of Hank Lewis' enterprise extremely doubtful. Every one knew that there was only room for one bank, and it was purely a matter of influencing a sufficient number of people one way or the other.

Jimmy, therefore, planned to take advantage of the doubt Hank's insinuations had created, and forthwith began to collect sufficient cash to pay off all his depositors with the intention of having Abe Johnson start a run on the bank. This procedure would not only establish their credit beyond dispute, but, if it were done before the new building was ready, the people, having no safe place to put their money and being satisfied that Hank's stories were without foundation, would redeposit their savings, well content to let them remain.

Jimmy discussed the scheme with Abe Johnson, who was enthusiastic, but he was careful not to say a word of it to his father; for there was to be a

sequel to this project that he feared Mr. Shipley might foresee and try to prevent. It was this: If his plan was successful, and he was confident it would be, Hank Lewis would have a useless bank building on his hands that he would be very glad to dispose of. Jimmy was prepared to relieve him of it in return for the old man's consent to his marriage with Mary, and he felt certain that Hank would not let his dislike for old Bill carry him to the length of losing a considerable amount of money.

One Friday afternoon Jimmy told Abe Johnson that he would be ready for the run the next day, and went to bed early that night to be prepared for what he knew would be a rather strenuous morrow. He was very sure of himself and certain that everything would turn out as he expected. He confided something of his plans to Mary, saying that she could go ahead with her trousseau, for he would have her father's consent to their marriage before very long.

Saturday morning dawned clear and warm, but even before it was light the farmers of the surrounding country were converging by many roads toward their centre of civilization, Riverside. Saturday was always a busy time, but this particular one found the little town crowded with anxious people. Eagerly they sought the general store to scan the usually cheerful features of Abe Johnson and to hear his rough assurances that everything was all right with the old bank.

But on this day there was a very different greeting. He scolded and muttered incoherently, until at last, being pinned down to a definite statement, he admitted having drawn out his account and that the money at that moment was lying in his own safe, at which he pointed with pride. Almost at the same moment some one reported that they had seen old Bill take an early morning train for Des Moines. Immediately Abe's news was coupled to this, and it was soon whispered that "old Bill had skipped out with the money!"

In a surprisingly short time men

were running about calling excitedly to one another that "Abe Johnson had said that old Bill had skipped out of town with all the money in the bank!"

A throng gathered about the store, and forced Abe to repeat his information to each newcomer, and, although he mildly denied saying anything of old Bill, he reiterated the fact that he had taken his own money out of the bank. The crowd increased momentarily, pushed and shoved, angry and threatening, with a very real fear in their hearts.

Hank Lewis, realizing that he had made a mistake in starting his rumors too soon, tried to reassure everybody, but without success. The crowd took the bit in its teeth, and when some one shouted, "Let's go and see for ourselves," they turned toward the other end of the town, and, with a yell of fury, broke into a rushing, scattered mob, heading straight for the bank.

Meanwhile Jimmy Shipley, going to the bank rather earlier than usual, was surprised to find Herman, the general factotum, there before him.

"What are you doing here at this time of day?" he asked pleasantly.

"Your father has gone to Des Moines with the money," answered Herman, with Teutonic indirectness.

"What are you talking about?" demanded Jimmy, aghast.

For answer Herman handed him a note, which read as follows:

You're a pretty foxy boy, but the old man is still awake. This run on the bank is a good scheme, and I'm thinkin' it would have put Hank out of business if it had come off, and maybe he would have been willin' to see his daughter marry you, for one reason or another; but I ain't, though if you can get his permission I won't say a word. I got it all out of Abe, bein' suspicious of all that cash you was pilin' up. Somehow it didn't seem natural at this time of year. I've taken about two-thirds of it, and I guess if your run comes like you've been plannin' I'll find things shut up tighter than a brick when I get back on Monday to pay off. I'm a peaceable man or I'd stay and see this fracas out. I've left you a fine list of securities, so you needn't worry about the bank examiner. All you lack is cash. You'll be able to pay off about a third of 'em. I'd stop it, if I was you.

The note was signed with his father's initials.

Jimmy groaned and called the boy, by whom he dispatched a note to Abe Johnson, telling him to stop the run.

The answer came back promptly: "Too late! Things startin' your way now!"

Almost at the same moment the noise of an angry crowd was heard as the van of the mob hurled itself against the outer doors.

Herman, white-faced, but entirely calm, came into the back room.

Jimmy was pacing the floor in an anguish of disappointment and chagrin. He glanced at the clock, and saw that he had fifteen minutes before the regular opening time, and he ordered Herman to tell the crowd that not until then would he unbar the doors. Then he took up his restless walk, realizing his helplessness, but not yet ready to give up. How could he get the cash? There was not enough of it in the town to satisfy the clamoring throng outside the building, and ruin stared him in the face. His father had got the better of him so far, and there didn't seem to be any way out of his difficulty.

Suddenly he stopped abruptly. "There's just a chance!" he muttered, and five minutes before the opening hour he called Herman.

"You see there's going to be a run on us," he said.

Herman's fatalistic temperament asserted itself, and he shrugged.

"You will open at the regular time," Jimmy ordered.

"And the money?" Herman inquired.

"You have all there is."

"Then," said Herman, turning toward the vault, "we pay a very few. And then"—he spread out his hands widely—"then we bust!"

"Don't be too sure of that," Jimmy retorted. "You pay them off just as slowly as you can."

Then, turning, he took up his hat, and hurried out of the back door.

The crowd, being fairly reasonable, waited after Herman had told them that the bank would open at the regular time, and, on the stroke of the hour, he

threw wide the doors. There was a rush for places at the head of the long line, and then the anxious men and women waited impatiently while the business of paying them off began. Eagerly those in front clutched the money handed to them, counting it under the eyes of others seemingly less fortunate, but the sight of actual cash was reassuring, and soon a hope began to spring up which spread rapidly through the waiting column like a healing balm.

Meanwhile, at the other end of the town, another line was forming. Having gotten their money from the bank, many of the people began to worry about the care of it, and, when they returned to the store, Abe's big red safe standing behind the counter looked so secure that there was an immediate demand that he should take it for them and lock it up there. Abe readily consented, stipulating only that they should help him to move the safe into the back room as an added precaution, and, after willing hands had accomplished this, the recently secured cash was handed over to the accommodating storekeeper.

All day long these two lines slowly waxed and waned. At the bank Herman deliberately, and with growing wonder on his pale face, paid out money that young Shipley produced from time to time; while at the store Abe Johnson was busy writing receipts on his billheads and disappearing into the little back room. Those in the store smiled with satisfaction as they listened to the sharp click of the lock as the safe door closed, thinking gratefully that their hard-earned savings were at least out of danger for the present.

Late in the afternoon, long after closing time, the line in front of the paying teller's window was gone; the last depositor had been paid in full, and Herman sat heavily in a chair facing Jimmy Shipley.

"It is that I do not understand," he grunted. "We have not bust, and— and where did you get the money?"

"Oh, it was simple enough," Jimmy



returned, with a laugh. "You see, Abe Johnson did it all."

He had been under a considerable strain, and was happy to have it over with. He had won out in spite of everything.

"So!" ejaculated Herman, not in the least understanding.

"Yes, that was the way of it," Jimmy went on. "I was worried at first. Yes, a good deal worried, I admit, but as soon as the people began giving their money to Abe to keep for them, I knew we were all right."

"So!" exclaimed Herman. "I did not know he had that much money."

"It wasn't Abe's money," Jimmy returned. "Don't you see how it was? As fast as Abe took the money in at the store, I hustled it up here by the back lane, and you paid it out again. It kept me on the jump, but—"

"Himmel! It was beautiful!" cried Herman. "And I never guessed! Though I could not recognize the money. It all looks much the same, and—"

He broke off into a hearty laugh, in which Jimmy joined gleefully, but at that moment a boy came running from the store with a note from Abe Johnson. The note read:

What shall I do? They want their money now! Won't wait till Monday. Think I'm in a scheme with Hank Lewis to ruin our bank!

Jimmy grabbed his hat with an exclamation of dismay, and rushed out, telling Herman not to stir.

As young Shipley pushed his way into the store he heard sounds of a violent altercation, which ceased only when he forced his way to the counter. Behind it stood honest Abe Johnson, purple in the face and quite panic-stricken. All eyes were turned to Jimmy. It was recognized that he might be capable of coping with this situation, which was a financial one.

"What's the matter?" Jimmy asked.

There was a momentary silence, and then the deep voice of Bill Hardy took up the tale for the worried farmers.

"I'll tell you what's the matter, Jimmy. This here Abe and old Hank

Lewis has put up a job on you. They've pestered us about our money ever since this new bank was started, and when your old man left town this morning this here Abe told us he'd skipped off with all our money."

"Tain't so!" shouted Abe, but his voice was drowned in a chorus of furious protests as to the truth of Bill's words.

"Well," Hardy resumed, after quiet had been restored, "well, we gets scared and goes after our money, and what do we find? That it's all a put-up job, and you pays us like a gentleman, which proves conclusive that Abe lied. But that ain't all. This here Abe has got all our money in that red safe of his and he don't want to give it up. He keeps tellin' us he's afraid we'll lose it."

Again a howl of execration went up from the throng, and the storekeeper trembled.

"I guess I'm speakin' fer the hull of us when I say," Hardy continued, "that, though we hain't got no place to put our money, we don't want Abe to keep it no longer, not after the lies he's told about old Bill—and what we'd like you to do, Jimmy, is just to let us put it all back again and say no more about it. I guess we'll be satisfied to let it stay there, no matter how many other banks Hank Lewis opens up. As for gettin' our money from Abe"—he turned fiercely on the storekeeper—"we'll guarantee to get it all right!"

Jimmy looked thoughtful for a moment, and shook his head.

"The bank's closed till Monday," he said positively.

Abe Johnson made an inarticulate noise in his throat, and stared at Jimmy in utter amazement, then he tried to speak, but Hardy broke in harshly:

"You ain't in on this, Abe. No one can expect Jimmy to listen to you after all you've said about his dad. But," he went on, turning to Jimmy, "we don't trust this feller any more. He may be all right keepin' a store, but he ain't got no business in high finance nohow, so askin' you not to pay no attention to him, we'd be obliged if you'd reconsider and open up the bank again.

We'll guarantee to let the cash stay there this time, and Hank Lewis can turn his new concern into a blacksmith's shop or anything else he likes, but all the money he'll get from us he can put in his hat without makin' it any too small fer him."

Jimmy Shipley stood apparently in deep thought, while Abe Johnson clutched at the edge of the counter, forcing back the fierce oaths that threatened to break forth. Finally Jimmy raised his head and spoke.

"I was hoping to retire from this banking business," he began, with a shade of regret in his voice, "but I guess I'll have to keep at it. I want you all to understand, however, that I'm doing it as a favor, and let me tell you something, there's not a bank in New York that could have done what our little bank did to-day. I want you to remember that in the future when somebody else comes around with hints about us. As to Abe Johnson here, you don't give him half a show. You're so busy changing your minds that he

can't follow you, and I don't blame him. Now, give him ten minutes or so to get started and then come along. I'll go and open up again."

They cheered Jimmy heartily as he shouldered his way through the crowd. As he started back to the bank he stopped a moment and smiled confidently, with the air of a proprietor, at the new bank building that was to have been Hank Lewis' revenge on him and his father.

It was past midnight when the last depositor had gone out of the door, and Jimmy was pretty tired of carrying bills and coins, first from the store to the bank, then from the bank to the store, but it was done at last, and the credit of William Shipley & Co. was established for all time.

"Herman," he said, as he took up his hat to go home, "I think we'll open a brand-new set of books just to celebrate our going into the new building. And say," he added, with a faint smile, "that won't be all we'll celebrate, either!"



## THE SINGERS

THE ocean laughs and sings;  
Making wild music, while the waves it flings  
On the shore.

The city fiercely sings;  
Clanging its golden cymbals, strident rings  
Its mad roar.

The river softly sings;  
Chanting in tender cadence, peace it brings  
Evermore.

And birdland wakes and sings;  
Trilling, the feathered songsters spread their wings,  
Upward soar.

But Helen sweeter sings:  
Helen, whose vibrant voice to mem'ry clings:  
I adore.

L. E. JOHNSTON.

# A ROSE COLORED QUEST



**B**ARBARA dropped her embroidery. Her dark eyes swept the porch absently. "That reminds me," she said somewhat vaguely, "I must go and look up my veil."

Four pairs of eyes—three of them masculine—glanced Barbaraward. That young lady was folding her work.

"Thinking of taking the veil, eh, Miss Barbara?" said Mr. Max Melville indolently, laying down his magazine.

"It must first be found," said Barbara.

"Where'd you lose it, Bab?" Walter King threw down his half-smoked cigar.

"That I hope to determine by a search," said Barbara sweetly.

"You had it yesterday," Barbara's sister said, without looking up from her Irish crochet.

"Not this particular veil," said Barbara. "It's a most particular veil, and I've a most particular reason for wanting to find it. It is——"

"Rose color," suggested Max Melville.

"How did you guess?" asked Barbara.

"When you wear it, Miss Barbara, I always see rose-colored visions. And it was in your pocket that windy day before yesterday in the woods."

"Thank you," cried Barbara. "I had quite forgotten. Now I know just where to look for it."

Jack Lynn rose from the lower step. He towered up over Barbara in his big, handsome, masterful way.

"We'll go find it," he said.

Barbara laughed up at him.

"You amuse me, Jack," she said; "but, as you suggest it, we will go find it."

Barbara held out her hand. Jack Lynn helped her up. It was a small hand to be so sought after, small and browned, delightful to touch or hold. It was firm and honest, and had a sweet, half-unconscious way of returning your clasp sometimes ever so slightly.

Barbara, herself, matched the hand. She was small and browned, too, with the delicacy of some rare china. But she was, also, absurdly firm. Jack watched her as she walked lightly along the leafy trail.

He knew by heart every phase of the exquisite face, with eyes which said to a man, when they looked at him—and they looked often—"Don't you *dare*!" and lips that said, as plainly as lips can without words: "*Don't* you dare?"

Jack recalled, half whimsically, the one time he had obeyed the faint invitation of the lips against the command of the eyes, and the withering scorn and contempt both eyes and lips had poured forth upon him in consequence. This was the first time since then that he had been accorded the honor of Barbara's exclusive society.

"What are you thinking of, Jack?" asked Barbara, turning suddenly and facing him.

"You," said Jack. "What are you thinking of?"

"My lost veil, of course. Mr. Melville seemed to think I had it the day we came this way."

"Which is ahead now?" asked Jack

irrelevantly. He came to her where she stood under the scarlet maple and took one of her hands. "Let's walk the way we used to when we were children, Babbie, and swing hands—so. Now, which is ahead? Melville? King?"

"Neither." Barbara glanced up half gravely, half roguishly. "There's—there's some one else, Jack."

"Really, Babbie?"

"Honest-true, Jack."

Jack stood still. Barbara perforce came to a standstill, too.

"Look at me, Barbara."

Barbara looked up. For one brief instant her eyes met Jack's. Then they fell and the warm color surged up into her face.

"It's true," said Jack. He dropped her hand. "How—how long has it been, Babbie?"

"Ever since that day," said Barbara confusedly. "That is—I mean I've known it—since then. It's been always. I mean a long time. You know it seems always, Jack, when at last you really care."

"I know," said Jack. "But what day, Babbie?"

"The day I—the day you—the day we went up Eagle Trail."

"The day I kissed you?"

Barbara nodded. "It was *that* made me know. You see—I never supposed you cared that way, Jack. We were just friends. You were almost the only man who didn't make love to me. But, when you kissed me—I knew—"

"Knew there was some one else?"

Barbara's bent head and flushed cheeks were her only answer. But they were quite sufficient.

"I see," said Jack sadly. "So that was why you told me you wanted me for your friend, not your lover."

"You don't understand—quite," began Barbara.

"Yes, I do, little girl," said Jack quietly. "And you mustn't feel badly. We've known each other always, and I've always loved you. It's quite natural you should never have thought of me that way. But you see, dear, I'm so in the habit, I shall just have to go

on loving you. It won't interfere with my being your friend."

"Jack," said Barbara miserably, "you don't understand at all. I told you I wanted you for a friend because—because I thought then that I did. But—I've found—I don't."

"Not even for a friend?" cried Jack. "But I can't help that, you know, Babbie, and neither can you. I'll try not to trouble you, not to see you, often. But I must always be your friend. My love is big enough even for that—to be just your friend, dear."

"You shall not be just my friend," cried Barbara.

Looking down, Jack saw her eyes bright through stormy tears.

"You are so stupid, Jack, you don't deserve any explanation. I've tried and tried to tell you just as well as a woman can—and you won't understand. It's—it's *you*, Jack!"

After a long woodsy way the trail came out suddenly into the sunlight of the highway. Jack and Barbara were reminded of this fact by the swift passing of an automobile.

"Found your veil, Miss Barbara?" called Max Melville from the car.

"Veil?"

As the car disappeared in a cloud of dust, Barbara smiled up at Jack.

"We'll look as we go back," said Jack.

"We won't find it," said Barbara. "I've a dreadful confession. That veil, this very minute, is in the pocket of my coat. It's been there all the time. And I knew it. I had to make some excuse, Jack. To-day was our very last day."

"But, Babbie," said Jack, "the veil is not in your pocket."

"Yes, it is," said Barbara positively. "I saw a corner sticking up when we were there on the porch of the hotel. That's what made me think of going to look for it."

"It's not there now," said Jack. "It's in my pocket. Just after we started I saw it in yours, and I thought you had forgotten it was there. So—I appropriated it. I felt I must have something that belonged to you, dear. But

now that I have so much, I can afford to be generous."

Jack pulled a yard or two of soft rose gauze from his inner left breast pocket.

"So our rose-colored quest was all in vain," laughed Barbara.

She passed the veil over her dark hair and brought it down on either side of her face.

Jack caught the flying ends in his hands, and tied them firmly under Bar-

bara's chin. He glanced from chin to scarlet mouth, from scarlet mouth to dark eyes. And suddenly he saw that eyes and lips no longer contradicted each other, but that both, with the faintest interrogation, asked: "*Don't you dare?*"

Of course Jack dared—not once, but many times. And between dares, he said:

"It was the very best quest I ever undertook, dear!"



## AS TO OTHER WORLDS

WHATEVER other worlds may be,

Wherever be those realms of bliss,  
I only hope that those I see

Will turn out half as good as this.

The grass cannot be greener there,

Nor any birds that sweeter sing;

Nor can there be a softer air

Than that that comes with dawning Spring.

Can summer breezes softer blow?

Can any stars wear friendlier mien?

Hath any embers richer glow

Than those that here with us are seen?

Are flowers sweeter to the sense,

Can roses tell us more of love,

Or dress with more magnificence,

In other worlds we know not of?

Nowhere can sunbeams happier play

Than on this blessed earth we know;

And even when the days are gray,

And all is hid in drift and snow,

What rarer joys can there beguile,

When twilight with its peace hath come,

Than that unfailing radiant smile

With which Affection calls us home?

JOHN KENDRICK BANGS.

# **FOR BOOK LOVERS** **Archibald Lowery Sessions**

A remarkable two-part story by a distinguished author promised for the November number. Robert W. Chambers' "The Green Mouse" one of his fantastic stories without much point. "The Taming of Red Butte Western" by Francis Lynde a good story. Henry Russell Miller's "The Man Higher Up" a story of Pittsburg. Elizabeth Dejeans shows improvement in "The Heart of Desire." "The Head Coach" by Ralph D. Faine an apotheosis of muscular Christianity. F. Marion Crawford's "The Undesirable Governess" rather cheap



T is the opinion of some people that the names of authors carry little weight with the reading public in the selection of magazines at a news stand. It may or may not be true; we do not profess to be in a position to dogmatize on the subject; we only know that there are some authors whose stories always bring us letters of approval, and from that we infer, at least, that our readers have their favorites.

In this number we have given you the work of several of your particular friends. Booth Tarkington and Harry Leon Wilson are responsible for the complete novel. H. F. Prevost Battersby has a very warm place in your hearts, if we may judge from the number and tone of the letters that his stories always bring us. Mr. Battersby, by the way, has been writing for AINSLEE's for the last six years, and, so far as we know, he has never done anything for any other American magazine.

Anne Warner, Ethel Watts Mumford, and Mrs. W. K. Clifford are also familiar names, and their stories in AINSLEE's are always welcome, because they are always good ones.

The October number is going to be one of the best of the year. We have prepared a table of contents of greater variety than usual, and every one of the

stories is a perfect specimen of the type it represents. E. F. Benson, J. W. Marshall, Samuel Gordon, Anthony Partridge, Morgan Robertson, Owen Oliver, and Alden Arthur Knipe are some of the authors.

In order that you may be prepared for it, we want to let you know now that we shall begin a two-part story in the November number by one of the most successful and widely known novelists of the last ten years. It was by a particularly lucky stroke that we secured the story for you, for it is one of the distinguished author's most remarkable stories. Next month we will tell you more about it.



Robert W. Chambers periodically varies the theme of "The Fighting Chance" by some grotesquely fantastic tale like "The Tracer of Lost Persons" or "Iole." If it is designed to give an impression of the author's versatility it is simplicity itself, and one that is extremely easy to work out.

His latest book, "The Green Mouse," one of these unreal productions, is published by D. Appleton & Co. Just what the purpose of these fancies is does not seem to be altogether clear. We suspect that Mr. Chambers intends them as delicately satirical, but, of course,



that may be a mistake. He seems to realize, however, that to make a sale for fiction of this kind a good deal of love must be mixed with it, and so it is in "The Green Mouse," love of the peculiar Chambers quality.

The story tells of the operations of The Green Mouse Society, a corporation "formed, not only for the purpose of psychical research, but for applying practically and using commercially the discovery of the psychic currents." The society had not, at the close of the narrative, used psychic currents commercially, but their practical application is made freely available by sorting and rearranging the currents of various interesting young men and women in such a way as to produce affinities.

This is a decided advance on the methods of Nature, because it avoids her blunders in settling affinities.



"The Taming of Red Butte Western" is another of Francis Lynde's stories of the industrial operations in the West. It is published by Charles Scribner's Sons. In it Mr. Lynde tells how the chaos which prevailed in the management of "two streaks of rust and a right of way through the Red Desert" was reduced to order.

Howard Lidgerwood was the man selected by the purchasers of this unpromising railroad property to reorganize it, and they had not a little difficulty in persuading him to undertake the job. His reluctance was due, as he himself was obliged to confess, to his firm conviction that he was a coward of men, and to prove it to Mr. Stuart Ford, the vice president of the road, he told the story of a holdup in which he had played a rather ignominious part and in consequence of which he had, as he supposed, forfeited the love of the girl to whom he was engaged.

Mr. Lidgerwood's reluctance is not surprising; the conditions he was called upon to face might have made a more fearless man hesitate. But he accepts the position, nevertheless, as a sort of

last resort, having some hope that he may be able to prove his manhood.

It would not be quite fair to indicate the difficulties he encountered or how he met them, for that would be anticipating the reader's pleasure in the story.

Mr. Lynde has done better work than this, which is more or less discursive, but still it is an interesting tale.



The Steel City "lies in a basin where two rivers meet to form a mighty third." It is the city of "The Man Higher Up" by Henry Russell Miller, a book which is published by the Bobbs-Merrill Co. We may be pardoned a suspicion that Mr. Miller is thinking of Pittsburgh, and if it is correct he must be congratulated for his shrewd selection for the scene of his tale. Pittsburgh offers many advantages in this respect, not the least of which is that it ameliorates the creative pangs of the writer of fiction. In the vernacular there is "something doing" in Pittsburgh all the time, and if you want to write a story about it your hardest task is to choose your material judiciously and with a decent reserve.

Mr. Miller has been reasonably discriminating. He has picked out his Pittsburgh types and events, and has combined them in an earnest and uplifting exposition of the maxim that honesty is the best policy.

Bob McAdoo is the hero, but he is not the Pittsburgh hero of journalism. So far as the story's disclosures go, he never saw the Great White Way. He begins as a newsboy, becomes a political boss, and does many deeds of darkness, but is finally reformed by the purifying influence of a pretty widow, and is elected mayor of the steel city, and is made boss of the State, thus adding a qualification to another well-known maxim that virtue is its own reward.

The book, however, must be read to be adequately appreciated and that its lessons may be fully learned.



Elizabeth Dejeans's second book, "The Heart of Desire," published by

the J. B. Lippincott Company, shows progress. In this story she has wisely discarded the problem theme; there is, so far as we can see, no conscious purpose to teach a lesson, or point a moral, or to uncover evil, but simply to tell a story. If novelists would always confine themselves to this one thing and resist the temptation to preach and to "muckrake," if they would tell their stories—when they have anything to tell—and allow the problems and the morals to take care of themselves—as they always will—they would render a service to their art and gratify their readers.

The scene of the story is laid in Southern California, in the neighborhood of Los Angeles. We are, however, introduced to the two principal characters on a transcontinental train en route for San Francisco. Horton Payne and a young woman who, as it afterward turns out, is related to him in a way that he does not suspect and certainly does not desire, encounter each other for the first time as fellow passengers. The mystery that envelops her, the reserve and aloofness with which she meets Payne's well-intentioned advances and her inexplicable disappearance after accepting his assistance, give the story its initial impulse, and the solution of her motives is the foundation of the plot.

The story is a romance, pure and simple, and is sufficiently well told to make the book reasonably interesting summer reading.

Sewell Ford has another book about horses, "Just Horses" he calls it, published by Mitchell Kennerley.

It is worth noticing because Mr. Ford knows how to write entertainingly always and because when he writes about horses he displays a sympathy and understanding of the subject that is in itself attractive, whether one is actually interested in the matter discussed or not.

The book contains seven stories of horses of different types of usefulness, from the draft horse to the polo

pony, and they are flavored with a dash of equine psychology, enough to stimulate the interest and imagination without making them fantastic.



Ralph D. Paine's apotheosis of muscular Christianity in his new book, "The Head Coach," published by Charles Scribner's Sons, is a bit overdone, it seems to us; at any rate, if we are to judge by the standard of literary merit that he himself has set us. Athletic ambition and a call to the cure of souls may not have been, in the past, an incongruous combination; for the matter of that it may not be now, but the lapse of time has not lightened the task of preserving the balance between them so that neither of them shall appear as an affectation.

George Kingsland as a Yale football star and the head coach of the Jameson College eleven, is one type of young man; and George Kingsland, a shepherd of the sheep, is another. To attempt a mixture of the two and then to complicate matters by the introduction of a pretty girl gives the impression of a caricature St. Anthony.

Doubtless this will seem hypercritical, especially to those who have a taste for red-blood fiction and care little whether it is fluid or in clots, if the story has plenty of incident and vigor of movement, as this certainly has.

The Reverend George Kingsland had his troubles, first with his flock and then, as coach, with the Kappa Beta Alpha fraternity of Jameson, but his training on the Yale football field carried him through where his academic and theological discipline failed him. At least, that is the lesson we gather from the story.



Another posthumous novel by F. Marion Crawford is "The Undesirable Governess," published by the Macmillan Company.

Mr. Crawford is probably better known to the reading public through the Saracinesca tales than any of his

other novels, though "Mr. Isaacs" and "Greifenstein" are, as we think, the best of his works. His reputation rests upon the Italian stories, however, and it seems likely that they were his own favorites.

"The Undesirable Governess" is so little like his characteristic style as to give rise to some speculations respecting the reasons which prompted him to write it. An English society story, it is rather light in plot and quite unconvincing in theme. It comes as near being cheap as it is possible to conceive of anything coming from his pen.

Colonel and Lady Follett, who are the unhappy parents of two unmanageable girls, after a series of disastrous experiments with incompetent governesses, have finally, in despair, engaged an unprepossessing young woman to supervise the education and manners of the pair of tomboys. In spite of the misgivings of the distracted father and mother, Miss Ellen Scott reduces the children to subjection, but spoils it all—temporarily—by becoming engaged to the heir of the house.

It then transpires that Miss Scott is really the daughter of Sir Randolph Trevelyan.



In spite of its propriety, the title that Mr. Karl Feininger has chosen for his very able book, "An Experiential Psychology of Music," published by August Gemunder & Son, is unfortunate, for it is calculated to scare off a class of readers that would profit by it.

Mr. Feininger is himself a musician and composer, but beyond all he is a true teacher. His knowledge of his subject is thorough; more than that he is a deep psychologist of the musical temperament, and his book, and the theories that it embodies, are the result of over forty years of careful study of individual cases and repeated verification.

Mr. Feininger's theory of music-making, which he sets forth in a chapter entitled Mechanism, is peculiarly sane and practical in its conception, and for this reason interesting even to the

layman; to the teacher, it cannot but afford inspiration. The chapters on Teaching and Luxury discuss the characteristics most to be guarded against in training the musical temperament and give valuable help to the parent anxious to secure a competent instructor for his child. Under the head of Musicians, comes an analysis and classification of composers and their works, on a psychological basis, which, with the author's observations and comments, will help the unassuming listener to greater and more intelligent enjoyment of the masters. The last three sections of the book are devoted to a discussion of the musical criticism of to-day and the psychology of genius.

Mr. Feininger has given us a series of essays embodying a philosophy of music and its relation to men and women, almost, one might say, a practical religion of music, the sort of work that every art needs beside it, especially in America, to give it its place as a serious and ennobling pursuit for earnest minds.



Another of George Randolph Chester's "breezy" tales has just been published by the Bobbs-Merrill Company, under the title of "The Early Bird."

If one does not take offense at the more or less vulgar character of the people of the story, the Turners and the Stevensons and the Westlakes, he may find the story sufficiently interesting. Mr. Chester obviously takes little pride in them himself, for he has been at small pains to lend them his assistance in making a fairly consistent showing.

Sam Turner is one of those young men of whom their friends speak as being "on the job" all the time. His god is his business, and it engrosses all his time and thought; he has no knowledge of anything else, it embraces his whole experience of life, it is his only subject of conversation. What material these commercially minded youngsters offer for satire! But there is no satire in "The Early Bird"; it is written in dead earnest.

Sam's "kid brother" persuades him

to take a vacation, so he goes off to an expensive resort—a vacation would mean little to one of his type if it were not expensive—and there he falls in with a group of multimillionaires. The opportunity is too good to waste, and before he knows it he is involved in a network of “deals.” His attention to business is diverted more or less by his encounter with the daughter of one of the multimillionaires, Miss Josephine Stevenson, whose principal accomplish-

ment seems to be a trick of smiling amusedly and mischievously. At first, Sam's devotion to business perplexes and irritates her; but, before the end comes, she, too, has caught the fever, and Sam succeeds in making another “deal” with her.

The story is a glorification of trade, and its construction, characterization, dialogue, and general atmosphere are worthy of the theme. Probably it will be a “best-seller.”



## THE DISCIPLES

A GREAT king made a feast for Love,  
 And golden was the board and gold  
 The hundred wondrous gauds thereof;  
 Soft lights like roses fell above  
     Rare dishes, exquisite and fine;  
     In jeweled goblets shone the wine—  
 A great king made a feast for Love.

*Yet Love as gladly and full-fed hath fared  
 Upon a broken crust that two have shared;  
 And from scant wine as glorious dreams drawn up  
 Seeing two lovers kissed above the cup.*

A great king made for Love's delight  
 A temple wonderful wherein  
 Served jeweled priest and acolyte;  
 There fell no darkness day or night  
     Since there his highest altar shone  
     With flaming gems as some white sun,  
 A temple made for Love's delight.

*Yet Love hath found a temple as complete  
 In some bare attic where two lovers meet;  
 And made his altar by one candle's flame  
 Seeing two lovers burned it in his name.*

THEODOSIA GARRISON.

# Old Age a Condition

Really within Control

To a Great Extent



A man with a healthy body  
feels young, whatever his years.

The Secret of retained youth is in the food that builds and sustains the body, and a healthy mind.

The elasticity and "bound" of prime manhood is designed to last through after years.

Premature old age one brings upon himself through thoughtless living.

Scientists agree that most folks eat much more meat than the body needs.

The excess means **body work** and **body waste**. Premature decay follows.

A well-known food expert, knowing this, produced—

## Grape-Nuts

A scientific, predigested food containing the vital body- and brain-building elements of natural food grains. It is quickly assimilated, and nourishes in the right way.

Persons who have been careless in their living find the body promptly responds to the use of **Grape-Nuts**—they become alert, brisk and vigorous.

**"There's a Reason"**

Postum Cereal Company, Ltd., Battle Creek, Michigan, U. S. A.



# NABISCO

## SUGAR WAFERS

Refreshments served at five o'clock teas should never be elaborate. The hostess who serves NABISCO Sugar Wafers displays her knowledge of the conventions as well as respect for the likes of her guests.

NABISCO Sugar Wafers are always good form—always appreciated.

***In ten cent tins***

Also in twenty-five cent tins

**NATIONAL BISCUIT COMPANY**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



# Soon housewives will know



"Two Methods and a Moral."

breaking coal hods because of the relentless slavery to stoves and hot air furnaces. There's a way out—

The woman who escapes from the tyranny and drudgery of old-fashioned, insanitary heating methods to that of cleanly, automatic heating is surely open to congratulations. Too many housekeepers are chained to brooms, dust-pans, and back-

## AMERICAN & IDEAL RADIATORS & BOILERS

are the only means of warming a house without adding to the labor of its care. These outfits of IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators are absolutely clean, will outlast the building itself; and the fuel and labor

savings soon repay their cost, and thereafter prove to be big profit-makers. Step into any sky-scraper office building or fine store and you will see they are equipped with our outfits—the name of our Company you will find cast on the end of each radiator. It is an evidence of the high quality of our goods, also significant of the fact that men would not put up in their places of business with the annoying heating methods that their wives patiently endure.

To continue to use old-fashioned heating reflects upon the housewife—robs her of the few hours per day which she should be able to devote to better things. Buy an outfit of IDEAL Boilers and AMERICAN Radiators and like thousands of others who have bought, you will joyfully pass the good word along. Don't wait to build a new home or until another Winter. Put comfort into your present house—now done without tearing up, or disturbing old heaters until ready to put fire in the IDEAL Boiler. Write us today for catalogue, "Ideal Heating Investments."



A No. 4121 IDEAL Boiler and 450 ft. of 3/4-in. AMERICAN Radiators, costing the owner \$190, were used to Hot-Water heat this cottage.

At these prices the goods can be bought of any reputable, competent Fitter. This did not include cost of labor, pipe, valves, freight, etc., which installation is extra and varies according to climatic and other conditions.

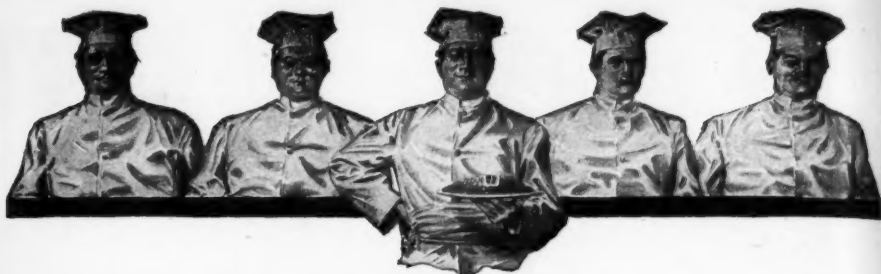
Showrooms in all  
large cities

## AMERICAN RADIATOR COMPANY

Write to Dept. -39  
Chicago



Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



## Our Excellent Cooks At Your Service

We have an army of cooks here—experts in baking beans.

They are ready to save you the sixteen hours required to prepare this dish.

They are baking now for a million homes, so their service costs each but a trifle.

They will send the beans to you—ready to serve in a minute—as fresh as though baked that day. You can keep a dozen cans on the pantry shelf, ready for any emergency.

They bake in steam ovens, heated to 245 degrees. They bake in small parcels, so the full heat goes through.

Their beans are digestible—they don't ferment and form gas—because they apply over twice the heat that gets to the center of your baking dish.

Yet their beans are not crisped—not broken—because they don't use dry heat. They come to you nut-like, mealy and whole.

And they bake the tomato sauce into the beans to give a delicious zest.

They are dealing with Nature's choicest food—a food that is 84 per cent nutriment. A food more nutritious than sirloin beef, and costing a third as much.

They prepare it far better than you can prepare it, because you lack all the facilities. They enable you to serve—without any trouble—the finest baked beans in the world.

Don't you think it would pay to let these cooks bake for you?

*"The National Dish"*

**VanCamp's**  
BAKED  
WITH TOMATO  
SAUCE  
**PORK AND BEANS**

*"The National Dish"*

Our process is the result of 49 years of experience. Our beans are Michigan beans—just the whitest and plumpest, picked out by hand. Our sauce is made of whole, solid tomatoes,

ripened on the vines. It costs us five times what common sauce sells for.

Let no one convince you that common baked beans are like Van Camp's. They are not.

*Three sizes: 10, 15 and 20 cents per can.*

**Van Camp Packing Company** Established 1861 **Indianapolis, Ind.** (90)

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



# Will Old Age Find YOU Still Drudging Along?

What is life going to mean to you? Is it going to mean comfort and prosperity, or is lack of training going to condemn you to hard labor for the rest of your days?

You are facing a serious problem—one that affords absolutely no compromise. To *earn enough* to command the *comforts* of life you must have *special training*, or else be content to fall in line with the huge army of the untrained, the poorly-paid, the dissatisfied, the *crowd in the rut*.

For you, there is a way to success—a true way—an easy way—a short way. Are you willing to have the International Correspondence Schools *make you an expert in your chosen line of work*, in your spare time, without your having to leave home or stop work? That is the way. It is the way that meets your special case. The terms are made to suit your means. The time is arranged to suit your convenience. The training is adapted to fill your needs. If you are willing, mark the attached coupon to learn all about it.

## FREE YOURSELF

That the I. C. S. can help you is shown by the 300 or so letters received every month from successful students who VOLUNTARILY report better positions and salaries as the direct result of I. C. S. Help. During June the number was 285. Mark the coupon.

Next month, next week, tomorrow, even an hour hence may be too late. Mark the coupon now and so take the first step to escape life-long servitude. Marking it entails no obligation—it brings you full information and advice regarding the way to your success.

**Mark the coupon NOW.**

### International Correspondence Schools, 622 1199 SCRANTON, P.A.

Please explain, without further obligation on my part, how I can qualify for the position, trade or profession before which I have marked X.

Bookkeeper

stenographer

Advertising Man

Show Card Writing

Window Trimming

Commercial Illustrating

Industrial Designing

Architectural Drafting

Building Contractor

Architect

Chemist

Language—

Banking

Civil Service

Electric Wireman

Elect. Lighting Supt.

Electrical Engineer

Mechanical Draftsman

Mechan. Engineer

Telephone Expert

Stationary Engineer

Textile Manufacturing

Civil Engineer

Concrete Construction

Plumbing, Steam Fitting

Mine Foreman

Mine Superintendent

Automobile Running

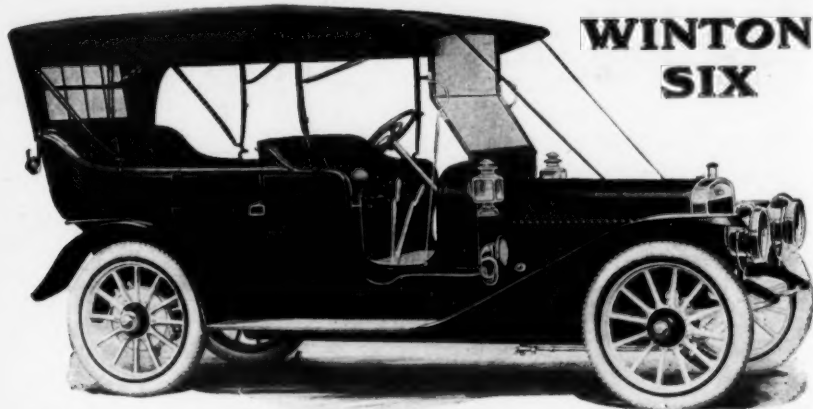
Name

Street and No.

City

State

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



## WINTON SIX

# Alters the Whole Question

“We had our first experience of the pleasure of owning an automobile with a . . . . . Thirty, but this new proposition of six-cylinders *alters the whole question*. It is so finished, so restful, so satisfying that it appeals to me through and through. I do indeed thank you for making so complete a car.”

⌚ This letter from a lady in California tells a big story briefly.

The Six *does* alter the whole automobile question.

It accomplishes previously impossible results in quietness, comfort, flexibility, hill-climbing, and economy.

Money spent lavishly to perfect a car of four-cylinders can only add to the price you pay. It can never add that finishing touch of continuous power, which is found only in the Six.

The Winton Six is high-grade in design, materials, workmanship, and classy finish.

It is superior in the beauty of its performance.

And supreme in low cost of upkeep. Its world's record of 77 cents per 1000 miles is the direct result of its six-cylinders, its continuous power, and its beautiful operation.

The Winton Six has the only self-cranking motor. Air does it. No clock springs: no complicated mechanism. Just one single moving part.

The 1911 48 H. P. Winton Six sells at \$3000. To find its value compare it with cars that cost \$4000 to \$6000.

Our catalog tells a plain, forceful, easily-understood story. Send coupon for copy.

THE WINTON MOTOR CAR. COMPANY  
Licensed Under Selden Patent  
CLEVELAND, U. S. A.

Branch Houses: Broadway and 74th St., New York; Berkeley and Stanlow Sts., Boston; 548-549 No. Broad St., Philadelphia; 309 N. Liberty St., Baltimore; Baum and Beatty Sts., Pittsburgh; 738-740 Woodward Ave., Detroit; Michigan Ave. and 17th St., Chicago; 14-22 Eighth St. N., Minneapolis; 1800 Pike St., Seattle; 208 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco.

THE WINTON MOTOR CAR. COMPANY  
122 Berea Road, Cleveland, Ohio.

Please send Winton Six literature to

Tell the substitutor: “No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye.”

**\$840.00**

**BUYS THE MATERIAL NEEDED TO  
BUILD THIS HOUSE.**

**Price Includes Blue Prints; Architect's  
Specifications; Full Details; Working  
Plans and Typewritten Material List.**



**OUR HOUSE DESIGN No. 151.**

In our house design No. 151 we show a modern eight-room house of the two story bungalow style. In size it is 24 feet wide by 32 ft. deep. The front porch is practically an out door living room, strictly private and is reached by a French window opening from the living room instead of the usual steps from the outside. The main entrance is on the side. The living room extends across the entire front of the house and is separated from the dining room by a large air hall. A coat closet is also provided on the first floor. Kitchen and pantry are of ample size. On the second floor are four large chambers and bath room, and four closets. The house is designed to be finished in Mission style and embodies every modern convenience. The construction is economical, the design harmonious, and in a general way this house appeals strongly to people of good taste. Our price for the material makes it an exceptional bargain, and those interested in building should write us. Our price is a positive bargain, quality, style and finish of material we furnish guaranteed.

**We Save You Big Money on Lumber and Building Material!**

The Chicago House Wrecking Co. is the largest concern in the world devoted to the sale of Lumber, Plumbing, Heating Apparatus and Building Material direct to the consumer. No one else can make you an offer like the one shown above. We propose to furnish you everything needed for the construction of this building except Plumbing, Heating and Masonry material. Write for exact details of what we furnish. It will be in accordance with our specifications, which are so clear that there will be no possible misunderstanding.

**How We Operate:**

We purchase at Sherid's Sales, Receivers' Sales and Manufacturers' Sales, besides owning outright sawmills and lumber yards. Usually when you purchase your building material for the complete home shown above, elsewhere, it will cost you from 50 to 60 per cent more than we ask for it. By our "direct to you" mode we eliminate several middlemen's profits. We can prove this to you.

**What our Stock Consists of:**

We have everything needed in Building Material for a building of any sort. Lumber, Sash, Doors, Millwork, Structural Iron, Pipe, Valves and Fittings, Steel and Prepared Roofing. Our stock includes Dry Goods, Clothing, Furniture, Rugs, Groceries, etc. Machinery, Hardware, Wire Fencing—in fact, anything required to build or equip. Everything for the Home, the Office, the Factory or the Field, besides everything to wear or to eat. Send us your carpenter's or contractor's bill for our low estimate. We will prove our ability to save you money. WRITE US TODAY, giving a complete list of everything you need.

**High Grade Bathroom Outfits!**



**Price of this Bathroom Outfit, \$37.50**

Strictly new and as good as anyone sells. We have everything needed in Plumbing Material. Our prices mean a saving to you of 30 to 60 per cent. We can easily prove it if you will give us a chance. Here is an illustration of a bathroom outfit we are selling at \$37.50. Your plumber would ask you about \$60.00 for this same outfit. This is a positive fact. We are offering at prices ranging from \$25.00 to \$100.00. Our catalog describes them in detail. You need the book if you want to keep posted on up-to-date business methods. Get our prices on Pine and Fittings. Write us today.

**Free Book of Plans!**

We publish a handsome, illustrated book containing designs of Cottages, Bungalows, Barns, Houses, etc. We can furnish the material complete for any of these designs. This book is mailed free to those who correctly fill in the coupon below. Even if you have no immediate intention of building, we advise that you obtain a copy of our FREE BOOK OF PLANS. It's a valuable book.

**Our Guarantee!**

This company has a capital stock and surplus of over \$1,000,000.00. We guarantee absolute satisfaction in every detail. If you buy any material from us not as represented, we will take it back at our freight expense and return your money. We recognize the virtue of a satisfied customer. We will be every instance "Make Good." Thousands of satisfied customers prove this. We refer you to any bank or banker anywhere. Look us up in the Mercantile Agencies, Ask any Express Company. Write to the publisher of this publication. Our responsibility is unquestioned.

**Hot Water Heating Plants!**

We furnish now complete hot water heating outfit at half the usual prices. Our proposition includes all necessary plans, specifications, blue prints and detailed instructions. Many ordinary mechanics handy with the use of tools can easily install it. You can't go wrong when you deal with us. We stand back of every sale. You send us today a sketch of your building and we will make you a proposition to furnish you a complete steam or hot water heating outfit. We also have hot air furnaces. Our booklet on heating plants tells every feature of the heating question. We can quote radiators & heaters separately. Whether you buy from us or not it is a valuable book for you to own. Write us today.



**Free Publications!**

**Write For Our Catalog.**

Fill in the coupon to get our catalog and we will send such literature as best suits your needs. We publish a 500 page mammoth catalog fully illustrated, giving our business history and showing all the vast lines of merchandise that we have for sale. We buy our goods at Sherid's, Receivers' and Manufacturers' Sales. Ask for Catalog No. 978. Our Book on Plumbing and Heating Apparatus contains 150 pages of useful information. Our free "Book of Plans" is described elsewhere in this advertisement.

**CHICAGO HOUSE WRECKING CO., 35th and Iron Sts., Chicago.**

**Water Supply Outfits!**

Modern Air Pressure Water Supply Systems at prices ranging from \$48.00 to \$200.00. They are strictly new, first-class and complete in every detail. It makes no difference whether you live in the country, you can enjoy every city comfort at little expense. Why not investigate this? We are ready to furnish you with all facts free of charge. All material fully guaranteed.

We also have a complete stock of Pipe, Valves and Fittings at 40 to 60 per cent saving. Gasoline Engines at low prices.

**Send Us This Coupon**

Chicago House Wrecking Co., 978

I saw this ad. in Ainslie's Magazine.

I am interested in \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Town \_\_\_\_\_

Co. \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# White Rock

*"The World's Best Table Water"*



## The Car That Won the Cup In Hill Climbing Race

Above is shown the Great Western "30" and its driver just after winning the Cup at the Pittsburg Hill climbing contest at Delphi, Ind., June 14th.

This feat was significant in itself—it demonstrated the wonderful power of the car—but it is even more significant in view of the fact that it was won against great odds.

Entered against the Great Western "30" in this race was a specially built 60 H. P. car, three 40 H. P. cars, in addition to one 30 H. P. car and two lighter machines.

The Great Western stands alone in this one feature—POWER. A rated 30 H. P. motor that really develops 40 H. P. in practice. This is the result of 16 years' experience in building motors up to 500 H. P. Every other feature of the Great Western at \$1600.00 is of the most approved type—such as are used in the cars of the highest price.

### PROMPT DELIVERY

can be made on this same model. We would like an opportunity to tell you all about its details. So write at once for full particulars.

**GREAT WESTERN AUTOMOBILE CO.,**

**PERU, INDIANA**



# LYON & HEALY PIANO

*Pure  
in Tone*



**T**HE cost of labor in the LYON & HEALY PIANO is double the cost in an ordinary piano; the material costs 50% more than usual; the whole piano, by its sterling character, perfectly represents the World's Largest Music House. It is **PURE IN TONE**. Prices \$350, \$375, \$400 and upward. Drop a postal today for the beautiful art catalog containing easel-back illustrations. You will then readily understand why this piano is the unquestioned triumph of the present day; why it is first choice of so many shrewd buyers; why 180 piano dealers in all parts of the world secured the agency during the past year. Write today. LYON & HEALY, Dept. Z1136, CHICAGO. (79)



## Manning-Bowman Coffee Percolator

**"METEOR"**



—For making coffee as it *should* be made—with *all* the coffee aroma, flavor and goodness and *none* of the harmful element.

The grounds *cannot* steep or boil as in the old-fashioned coffee pot—*because they are kept above the liquid*. The boiling water is *sprayed over them*, carrying off only the enjoyable part. No uncertainty—no failures—coffee always right—always appetizing—always healthful.

Made in Ura Style with alcohol burner for table use, and in Coffee-Pot Style for stove use. Very strong and handsome—real **MANNING-BOWMAN QUALITY**. Over 100 styles and sizes. All leading dealers. Write for booklet "J-28."

**MANNING, BOWMAN & CO., Meriden, Conn.**

(Makers of Manning-Bowman Denatured Alcohol Gas Stoves and "Eclipse" Bread Makers)

Tell the suostitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# OUTDOOR LIFE AND



## CUTICURA

Should be inseparable. For summer eczemas, rashes, itchings, irritations, inflammations, chafings, sunburn, facial eruptions, red, rough and sore hands, and sanative cleansing, as well as for all the purposes of the toilet, bath and nursery, Cuticura Soap and Cuticura Ointment are most valuable.

Sold throughout the world. Depots: London, 27 Charterhouse Sq.; Paris, 10, Rue de la Chaussée d'Antin; Australia, R. Towns & Co., Sydney; India, B. K. Paul, Calcutta; So. Africa, Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town, etc.; U. S. A., Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Sole Props., 133 Columbus Ave., Boston.

Post-free, 32-page Cuticura Book, an Authority on the Treatment and Care of Skin and Hair.

## "INFALLIBLE" SMOKELESS

The Dense Powder  
For Shotguns



Best For Trap and Field  
Shooting

"INFALLIBLE"

IS

"ALWAYS THE SAME"  
UNDER ALL CONDITIONS  
OF CLIMATE

E. I. DU PONT DE NEMOURS POWDER CO.  
Established 1802 WILMINGTON, DEL.

Send 20 cents in stamps for a pack of



Playing Cards, postpaid.

Address Dept. Y

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



## Delicious New Chewing Gum

that answers every chewing gum question — flavor, purity, "chewiness" — the highest quality ever produced. Packed in round, metal boxes, to keep goodness within and soil without. Popular with athletes, fishermen, golfers, etc.

### COLGAN'S Violet Chips

with the real flavor of the aroma of Sweet Violets. Irresistibly good. A toilet requisite. Delicately perfumes breath; keeps teeth clean.

### Mint Chips

with the flavor of old-fashioned mint stick peppermint. Never before successfully introduced into Chewing Gum. Aids digestion; refreshing after meals and smoking. Purifies breath.

**Handy for vest pocket and hand bag service.**

Avoid imitations and always specify Colgan's. No other gum is so good.

COLGAN GUM COMPANY, Inc., Louisville, Ky.

#### Pictures of famous ball players

In every 5c box of Violet Chips and Mint Chips will be found a fine half-tone picture of a famous diamond star. Collect the entire series.



# Hotel Somerset



COMMONWEALTH AVENUE AND CHARLES GATE EAST  
**Boston, Mass.**

A Select Hotel conducted on European Plan, Terrace Restaurant  
Open during Summer Months

Bookings for Fall and Winter may be made now

Special inducements for families and permanent guests

COMPLETE EQUIPMENT FOR BALLS, BANQUETS,  
CONCERTS AND SOCIAL EVENTS OF ALL KINDS

FRANK C. HALL, Manager

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING SECTION

Rate, \$1.00 a line, or \$2.25 a line, which includes SMITH'S and POPULAR Magazines, making a total of 4,000,000 readers—the cheapest and best Classified Advertising medium on the market. Next issue of AINSLEE'S closes Sept. 1st.

## Agents & Help Wanted

**WANTED.**—Railway Mail Clerks, Clerks at Washington, City Carriers. Fall Examinations everywhere. Preparation free. Write immediately for schedule, Franklin Institute, Dep't. W3, Rochester, New York.

**LADY SEWERS** wanted to make up shields at home; \$10 per 100; can make two an hour; work sent prepaid to reliable women. Send reply envelope for information to Universal Co., Desk S, Philadelphia, Pa.

**AGENTS.** Portraits 35c, Frames 15c, sheet pictures 1c, stereoscopes 25c, views 1c, 30 days' credit. Samples & Catalog Free. Consolidated Portrait, Dept. 1155, 1027 W. Adams St., Chicago.

**AGENTS WANTED** in every county to sell the Transparent Handle Pocket Knife. Big commission paid. From \$75 to \$300 a month can be made. Write for terms. Novelty Cutlery Co., No. 13 Bar St., Canton, Ohio.

**LIVE AGENTS WANTED.** Hustlers to handle our attractive combination packages of soap and toilet articles with valuable premiums. One Michigan agent made \$65 in 47 hrs., another \$21 in 8 hrs., another \$22.50 in 10 hrs. Write today. E. M. Davis Soap Co., 19 Union Park Court, Chicago, Ill.

**GET A BETTER PLACE.**—Uncle Sam is best employer; pay is high and sure; hours short; places permanent; promotions regular; vacations with pay; thousands of vacancies every month; all kinds of pleasant work everywhere; no lay-off; no pull needed; common education sufficient. Ask for free booklet I 22, giving full particulars and explaining my offer of position or money back. Earl Hopkins, Washington, D. C.

**MAKE MONEY** writing short stories or for Newspapers. Pleasant work for you; big pay. Send for free booklet tells how. Press Syndicate, San Francisco.

**LOCAL REPRESENTATIVE** wanted—Splendid income assured right man to act as our representative after learning our business thoroughly by mail. Former experience unnecessary. All we require is honesty, ability, ambition and willingness to learn a lucrative business. No soliciting or traveling. This is an exceptional opportunity for a man in your section to get into a big paying business without capital and become independent for life. Write at once for full particulars. E. R. Marden, Pres., The Nat'l. Co. of Real Estate Co., Suite 339 Marden Bldg., Washington, D. C.

## Agents and Help Wanted—Continued.

**AGENTS** to sell Ladies Novelty. Embroid. Waist Patt. Khumoo, Silk Shawls, Scarfs, Mexican Drawn Work, Battenberg, Cluny, Russian Laces Europ. & Orient Novelty. Ask for Cat. S. Bonan, Dep. D. 143 Liberty St. N. Y. C.

**LIVE MEN:** If you are making less than \$25 weekly send your address quick. If you have a horse and buggy or bicycle you can use, all the better. We teach you. You can start right where you live. Thomas Company, 902 Third Street, Dayton, Ohio.

**\$5,000 to \$10,000 per year** in the Real Estate business. No capital required. I will teach you how, and make you my special representative. Send for big Free Book. H. D. Hurd, 869 Dwight Bldg., Kansas City, Mo.

**SALESMEN.**—We have a Brand New, Clean Cut Side Line. Best Yet. Consigned goods. Prompt commissions. Ore Mfg. Company, 12 S. Jefferson St., Chicago.

**AGENTS.** Male and female can make \$10 to \$15 a day selling my new style pongee princess patterns, and imported French embroidered Swiss lawn waist patterns. Prices and particulars on request. J. Gluck, 621 B'way, N. Y.

## Music

**SONG** Poems with or without music wanted for publication. All subjects. Original. Examination and criticism free. G. G. Eaton, 419 6th Ave., N. Y.

**SONG-POEMS** criticised and revised free. With really good music yours may prove a money-maker. Send your poem to-day to Arthur A. Penn, 36 Childs' Bldg., 34th St., N. Y.

**\$100 Cash Prize** and your song published free. We pay all expenses. New plan for new writers. For plan, enclose stamp and address. The Geo. Boehmer Music Co., Aberdeen, S. D.

**"SHAPIRO," MUSIC PUBLISHER.** Wants Songs of Merit. Send your words, music, or songs complete. Write for particulars. "Pub Dept." cor. B'way & 39th St., N. Y. "Shapiro."

## Coins, Stamps, Etc.

**WE BUY COINS AND STAMPS.** Premiums paid up to 5000%. Send for Free Booklet No. 32. Royal Money & Stamp Co., 150 Nassau St., New York.

## Business Opportunities

**IF YOU WANT A POSITION,** prepare yourself by a thorough training. Carpenters and concrete men are in great demand at from \$4 to \$10 per day. We will equip you by practical work with either of these well paying trades at small cost for tuition and living expenses. Write for booklet. Independence Business & Trades College, Box X, Independence, Kan.

**YOU can start Mail Order Business** in your own home: Big profits; Everything furnished; free booklet tells how. S. T. Foote, Box 254, Muskogon, Mich.

**\$100 Monthly** and expenses to men and women to travel and distribute samples; big manufacturer. Steady work. S. Scheffer, Treas. MGI26, Chicago.

**GIVEN AWAY FREE.** Four different publications about the wonderful California Oil industry, to those making the request within 30 days. Address: Sagor-Loomis Co., 917 Phelps Bldg., San Francisco, California.

## Patents and Lawyers

**PATENTS SECURED OR FEE** returned. Send sketch for free report as to patentability. Guide Book and What to Invent, with valuable List of Inventions Wanted, sent free. One Million Dollars offered for one invention; \$16,000.00 for others. Patents secured by us advertised free in World's Progress, sample free. Victor J. Evans & Co., Washington, D. C.

**PATENT WHAT YOU INVENT.** Your ideas may bring you a fortune. \$250,000 Invention wanted. Our free books tell What to Invent and how to obtain a Patent. Write for them. Send sketch of invention for free opinion as to patentability. Patent obtained or fee returned. Patents advertised for sale free. Woodward & Chandler, Reg'd Attys, 1202 F St., Wash., D. C.

**PATENTS BOUGHT:** Many deals closed by our clients—one recently for \$650,000.00—our proof of Patents that Protect. Send \$c. postage for our 3 books for inventors. R. S. & A. B. Lacey, Div. 62, Washington, D. C. Established 1869.

**PATENTS THAT PROTECT AND PAY.** Books Free. High proof references; best results. Send for list of Inventions Wanted. Patents advertised Free. Send sketch or model for Free search. Watson E. Coleman, Patent Lawyer, 622 F Street, Washington, D. C.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

## Real Estate, Farms, Etc.

**\$10 TEXAS MAP FREE.** Showing every section of land in Texas orange belt. Would cost \$10 to buy. Free for 4c. postage. Address C. A. Elmer & Co., Desk B, Houston, Texas.

**\$25. CASH and \$10. per month buys** a \$500. building site in San Diego. Values rapidly advancing. Exposition City in 1915. New Railroad building. Most southerly port to Panama Canal. Write for booklet, maps, etc. Southwestern Investment Co., 1142 "D" St., San Diego, Cal.

**FRUIT FARMS IN KOOTENAY.** B. C. It has been amply demonstrated that these provide a life income as soon as the bearing stage is reached. We have some of the best tracts from 5 to 30 acres each, on easy terms of payment. Splendid climate, fishing, hunting and non-arduous work. Full particulars from Salmon Valley Land Co., Box 316, Nelson, B. C.

## Real Estate, Farms, Etc., Continued.

**IF A MAN COULD BUY TEN** Acres of land, pay for it with the first crop and have \$1,000.00 in the bank, all in 100 days, wouldn't that be worth looking into. We have what is called the best tract of black sandy loam soil in Florida. 1000 farms for sale now at \$25.00 per acre. Seven miles from Sanford where lands are \$100.00 to \$1500.00 per acre. Write to-day. Florida Homeland Company, 407 Atlantic National Bank Building, Jacksonville, Florida.

## For the Deaf

**'THE ACOUSTICON** makes the deaf hear instantly. No trumpet, unsightly or cumbersome apparatus. Special instruments for Theatres and Churches. In successful use throughout the country. Booklet, with the endorsement of those you know, free. K. B. Turner, President, General Acoustic Co., 1267 Broadway, New York City.

## For the Hair

**YOU** will look at least 10 years younger after using our hair food. It does not dye the hair. It absolutely restores gray hair to its natural (original) color without dyeing it. It makes the hair clean, luxuriant and beautiful. Price \$1.00. We want to hear from the sceptical. Dwight T. Sprague & Co., Chicago.

## Motor Boats, Etc.

**HOPKINS** sells everything for Motor Boats and Yachts. Send for catalog and save money. 119 Chambers Street, New York.

## Miscellaneous

**TOBACCO** Habit Cured or No Cost. Harmless Home treatment of roots and herbs; sure, pleasant, permanent. Send your name. King N-Ko 5, Wichita, Kan.



With the aid of the

# REMY Magneto

Robert Burman in Marquette-Buick

## Won 100-Mile Race for Remy Grand Trophy

(Fastest Long-Distance Stock Car Race of History)

**Won 50-Mile Race for G. and J. Trophy  
Won Second in 200-Mile Race for Cobe Cup**

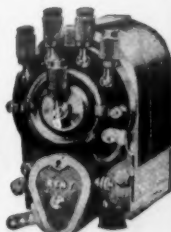
**AT INDIANAPOLIS SPEEDWAY JULY 1, 2, 4**

Remy-Equipped cars won 12 firsts, 9 seconds, 4 thirds and established 27 new records. In the 100-mile Remy Brassard and Trophy Race Burman averaged 74.44 miles per hour, (fastest long-distance stock car race of history.) In the time trials, Burman in the Remy-Equipped Buick attained a record speed of 105.87 miles per hour. Remy Magneto used by leading motor car manufacturers and most famous racing pilots. Built in the world's largest magneto factory. Remy superiority is established.

## REMY ELECTRIC COMPANY

**Anderson, Indiana**

**Branches** Automobile Bldg., 64th and Broadway, New York City, 1490-1497 Michigan Ave., Chicago, 471 Woodward Ave., Detroit, 406 E. 15th St., Kansas City, 170 Golden Gate Ave., San Francisco, 214 Pleasant St., Boston.  
**Agencies** Auto Equipment Co., 1518 Broadway, Denver, Hollis Electric Co., 9 N. Sixth St., Minneapolis, J. H. McCullough & Sons, 219 N. Broad St., Philadelphia.



Remy Magneto

**"Best in the  
World"**



Remy Trophy

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

# DIAMOND FAST COLOR EYELETS

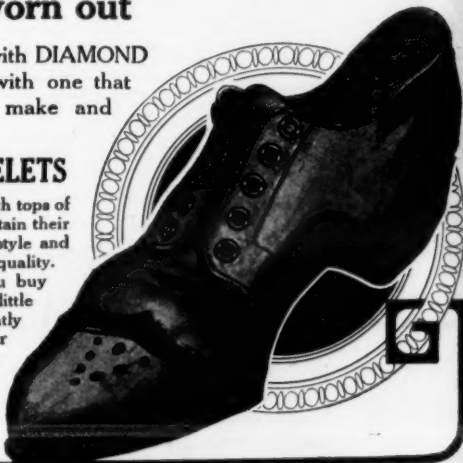
Look bright and new even after the shoe is worn out

Compare an old shoe fitted with DIAMOND FAST COLOR EYELETS with one that has eyelets of a different make and notice the difference.

## DIAMOND FAST COLOR EYELETS

are not like other eyelets. They are made with tops of solid color, so they cannot wear brassy, and retain their bright new appearance always. They add style and grace to the shoe and are a guarantee of shoe quality. It will pay you to look for them when you buy shoes. They are easily distinguished by a little diamond shaped trade mark slightly raised on the surface of each eyelet. Ask your dealer about them or ask us and we will send you our book describing them fully.

UNITED FAST COLOR EYELET CO.  
Boston, Mass.



BACKED BY EIGHT BANKS OF UNQUESTIONED RELIABILITY MAKES OUR WORD AS GOOD AS OUR TERMS. ON...

### WATCHES AND DIAMONDS

\$25 00	\$100 00	A WEEK
\$50 00	\$150 00	A WEEK
\$100 00	\$250 00	A WEEK

ASK FOR BOOK SHORT TALKS LONG TERMS

**Times Watch & Diamond Co.**  
**TIME PAYMENTS**  
206 W 42<sup>nd</sup> St. Write  
AT TIMES SQUARE NEW YORK Dept. B.

**WHITE VALLEY GEMS** IMPORTED FROM FRANCE

**SEE THEM BEFORE PAYING!**  
These Gems are chemical white sapphires. Can't be told from diamonds except by an expert. Stand acid and fire diamond tests. So hard they can't be filed and will cut glass. Brilliance guaranteed 25 years. All mounted in 14k solid gold diamond mountings. Will send you any style ring, pla or stud on approval—all charges prepaid—no money in advance.

**WHITE VALLEY GEM CO., 706 Holiday Bldg., Indianapolis, Ind.**

**Send on Approval. Send No Money. \$2.00**  
**WE WILL TRUST YOU TEN DAYS.** Hair Switch Send a lock of your hair, and we will mail a 22 inch short stem fine human hair switch to match. If you find it a bit longer, return \$2.00 in ten days, or sell it and GET YOUR SWITCH FREE. Extra shapely a little more. Include postage. Free beauty book showing latest style of hair dressing—also high grade curlers, comb, dour, wig, puff, etc.

**ANNA AYERS,**  
Dept. 310, 19 Quincy St. Chicago

A WINEGLASSFUL—BEST BEFORE BREAKFAST

THE BEST

## "APENTA"

NATURAL APERIENT WATER

BOTTLED AT THE SPRINGS, BUDA PEST, HUNGARY.

**Flash Like Genuine**

## BARODA DIAMONDS

ANY STYLE at 1/40 the cost—IN SOLID GOLD RINGS

Stand acid test and expert examination. We guarantee them. See them first—then pay. Special Offer—14k Tiffany ring 1 ct. \$5.95. Gentle ring 1 ct. \$6.95. 14k Stud 1 ct. \$4.95. Sent C.O.D. for inspection. Catalog FREE. Showa full line. Patent ring gauge included. 10c. The Baroda Co., Dept. A G, 328 N. State St., Chicago

**PATENTS Produce Fortunes**  
PRIZES for patents. Book on Patents. Hints to inventors. "Inventions Needed." "Why Some Inventors fail." All sent Free. Special lists of possible buyers, to our own clients. Send rough sketch or model for search of Patent Office records. Local representatives in 300 Cities and Towns. Our Mr. Greeley was formerly Acting Commissioner of Patents and has such full charge of U. S. Patent Office. **GREELEY & MCINTYRE,** Patent Attorneys, Washington, D. C.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



# A Year to Pay For Your FURNITURE

We give customers over a year's time in which to pay for their purchases. You are welcome to this splendid credit service no matter where you live. You may enjoy the full use of the goods you buy of us and pay for them in small amounts from month to month as you earn the money. We charge absolutely nothing for this credit service—no interest—no extras of any kind. So low are our prices that we couldn't allow any discount even if you sent cash with your order. We have 22 great stores and sell more home furnishings than any other two concerns in the country. We own and control factories—sell on a closer margin of profit and at lower prices than your local dealer or any other mail order house on earth. *We guarantee satisfaction or money back.*

## CATALOG No. 55 FREE

Write for our Big New Catalog today. It tells all about our most gen-

erous monthly payment credit plan. It's an immense volume, handsomely illustrated in colors. It quotes factory prices on everything to furnish and beautify the home, including Furniture, Stoves, Carpets, Rugs, Curtains, Pianos, Crockery, Pictures, Lamps, Clocks, Mirrors, Silverware, Refrigerators, Sewing Machines, Washing Machines, etc.

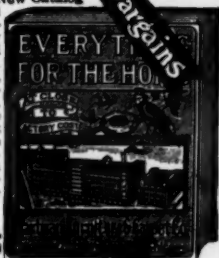
### BASE BURNER

**\$3** Cash with order, balance \$2 monthly. A powerful double enter, self feeding, draw center grate, elaborately trimmed in nickel. No. 3 501 11 in. fire-pot \$19.85 No. 3 502 12 in. fire-pot 22.75 Terms \$3 cash; \$2 monthly.

### HARTMAN Furniture & Carpet Co.

Best E6 223 to 225 Wabash Ave., CHICAGO  
Largest, oldest and best known homefurnishing concern in the country—established 1865—55 years of success—22 big stores—over 700,000 customers—capital and resources greater than that of any similar concern. Write for our big catalog at once.

**Big Furniture  
BOOK  
MAILED  
FREE**



**Get the Book!**

## Removes the Corn in 48 Hours

Don't suffer with corns any longer. Here is immediate, lasting relief—in wonderful Blue-jay Corn Plasters.

A felt ring of downy softness protects the corn and stops all pain instantly.

In the meantime a marvelous medication gets to work on the corn. In 48 hours it comes away freely—no pain—no harm—no soreness—no inconvenience—no spreading liquid—no nasty salve.

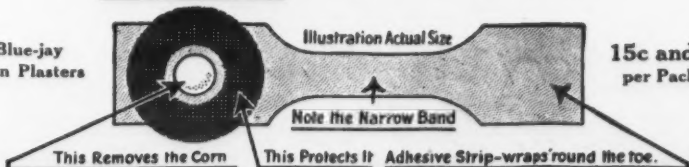
It is done neatly—simply—effectively. Every day more than 10,000 people buy Blue-jay, because they have heard, through their friends, what it does.

Buy a package yourself and try it. For sale by all druggists.

If you wish to be further convinced before spending even fifteen cents, ask us to mail you a sample—free

## Blue-jay Corn Plasters

Also Blue-jay  
Bunion Plasters



15c and 25c  
per Package

Bauer & Black, Chicago and New York—Makers of Surgical Dressings, Etc.

(61)

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



To overcome decay-acids in the mouth, a dentifrice must give a mild alkaline reaction.

## COLGATE'S RIBBON DENTAL CREAM

does this most efficiently.

These three rules for the care of the teeth should be followed:

1. Before brushing, remove food particles lodged between the teeth with floss silk or quill pick.
2. Have your dentist examine your teeth twice a year.
3. Use Ribbon Dental Cream with luke-warm water morning and night.

Colgate's Ribbon Dental Cream cleans—preserves—polishes deliciously and antiseptically. To teach the regular care of the teeth a pleasant dentifrice is necessary. Colgate's is pleasant to the taste, without the presence of sugar, and efficient as a cleanser, without grit.

*Trial Tube for 4 Cents*

Colgate & Co., Dept. A,  
55 John St., New York

Canadian Dept.

Coristine Bldg., Montreal



If you want  
class reading  
do no better  
Ainslee's readers  
advertising pages  
\$250.00, the  
250,000 per

to reach a high  
public you can  
than talk to  
through these  
The rate is  
circulation is  
month : : : :



Three  
Piece Outfit  
Beautiful Pan-  
ama Skirt-Hyde-  
grade Petticoat  
-Charming  
Wash Waist -  
all for  
**\$675**  
\$1.75 Cash -  
90c. Monthly.

## 700 Bargains Like This ON CREDIT

Suits, skirts, waists, petticoats, hats, hosiery, corsets—everything for women's wear is shown pictured on living models in our New Fall and Winter Style Book at prices that will simply astonish you. And all garments made tailored to fit—all of the highest quality and best workmanship.

### Six Months to Pay

No need of waiting until you can spare the cash to buy them. We open an account with you. You get the goods now, wear them and pay a little each month—so small you won't notice it. No publicity—no red tape. No security—no interest. Just your promise to pay is all we ask. And besides that, all goods are

### Shipped on Approval

Everything we sell is guaranteed. If anything you get from us is not satisfactory in every way, you simply return it. We will refund every penny of the money paid—even pay the express charges both ways.

### Send for This New Book

You owe it to yourself to at least see the bargains we offer. All we ask is the opportunity of proving every word we say. So write us today—if you want to save money and pay as you can, and this new FALL book containing over 700 illustrations of all that is newest and best in women's dress will be sent you **FREE** at once—all charges prepaid.

Bernard Mayer Co.,  
3442 Mospratt St.,  
Chicago.



(31)

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



This common expression is amply justified by the all-around utility of the Bissell Sweeper. No matter what the nature of the litter is, a BISSELL "Cyco" BALL BEARING Carpet Sweeper will do the work thoroughly, and with an ease that is little short of marvelous. It raises no dust, runs quietly, and means a saving of carpets and draperies. A BISSELL costs less than forty corn brooms, and lasts longer. They are sold by all dealers at prices from \$2.75 to \$5.75.

Write for booklet.

Buy a Bissell Sweeper from your dealer, send us the purchase slip *within one week* from date of purchase, and we will send you **FREE** a fine quality leather card case with no printing on it.

**BEWARE** of frauds who claim to be sent out by us to retail Bissell Sweepers. We employ no agents of this kind.

Address Dept. 56.

**BISSELL CARPET SWEEPER CO.**  
Grand Rapids, Mich.



## LABLACHE

FACE POWDER

### WOMEN—CONSPICUOUS

for complexions always smooth and velvety, that never lose their youthful attractiveness, that seem to be immune to exposure, to sun and wind, are users of that great beautifier—**Lablache**. It prevents that oily, shaly appearance, and counteracts the disagreeable effects of perspiration. Lablache is cooling, refreshing and pure.

Refuse substitutes. They may be dangerous. Fresh, White, Pink or Cream, 50c. a box, of druggists or by mail. Send 10c. for sample box.

**BEN. LEVY CO., French Perfumers**  
Dept. 40 125 Kingston St., Boston, Mass.



### Ten Days' Free Trial

allowed on every bicycle we sell. We ship on Approval and trial to anyone in the U. S. and *prepay the freight*. If you are not satisfied with the bicycle after using it ten days, ship it back and *don't pay a cent*.

### FACTORY PRICES

Do not buy a bicycle or a pair of tires from anyone at any price until you receive our latest Art Catalogs of high grade bicycles and sundries and learn our unheard of prices and marvellous new special offers.

### IT ONLY COSTS

a cent to write a postal and **FREE** by return mail. You will get much valuable information. **Do Not Wait to Write It Now!**

**FIRE, Cassiar-Broke rear wheels, lamps, parts, repairs and sundries of all kinds at half retail prices.**  
**MEAD CYCLE CO. Dept. T-110 CHICAGO**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



## Brown Your Hair

"You'd never think I stained my hair, after I use Mrs. Potter's Walnut-Tint Hair Stain. The Stain doesn't hurt the hair as dyes do, but makes it grow out fluffy."

Send for a Trial Package.

It only takes you a few minutes once a month to apply Mrs. Potter's Walnut Tint Hair Stain with your comb. Stains only the hair, doesn't rub off, contains no poisonous dyes, sulphur, lead or copper. Has no odor, no sediment, no grease. One bottle of Mrs. Potter's Walnut Tint Hair Stain should last you a year. Sells for \$1.50 per bottle at first-class druggists. We guarantee satisfaction. Send your name and address on a slip of paper, with this advertisement, and enclose 25 cents (stamps or coin) and we will mail you, charges prepaid, a trial package, in plain, sealed wrapper, with valuable booklet on hair. Mrs. Potter's Hygienic Supply Co., 1206 Groton Bldg., Cincinnati, Ohio.

## STERN'S Willow Ostrich Plumes

From Your Old Feathers

Write for Prices

Send us your old Ostrich feathers and from them we will make a magnificent

Willow Plume, faultlessly curled and dyed your favorite shade—guaranteed to look as well and to hold its shape and color, and wear as long as any Willow Plume you can buy from a dealer at three or four times the cost. If prices are not satisfactory feathers will be returned at our expense.

References: Don't, Bradstreet's or Mr. Wallace Back. The work of our Dyeing, Cleaning and Curling departments cannot be equalled. Write for prices.

**H. S. Stern Ostrich Feather Co., 310 Altman Building Kansas City, Mo.**



## Prof. I. Hubert's MALVINA CREAM

"The One Reliable Beautifier"

Positively cures Freckles, Sunburn, Pimples, Ringworm and all imperfections of the skin and prevents wrinkles. Does not merely cover up but eradicates them. Malvina Lotion and Ichthyol Soap should be used in connection with Malvina Cream. Cream, 50c; Lotion, 50c; Soap, 50c. At all druggists or sent postpaid on receipt of price. Send for testimonials.

**PROF. I. HUBERT, TOLEDO, OHIO**

# GRAND HOTEL New York City A Famous Home, with a **NEW ANNEX**

On Broadway, at 31st Street  
Near Pennsylvania R. R. Terminal

A house made famous through its splendid service, and personal attention to patrons—the Grand counts its friends by the thousands. Army and Navy people stop here, as do all experienced travelers. For more excellent living facilities, quiet elegance and *sensible prices*, are hardly obtainable elsewhere.

As for transportation facilities, New York's subways, elevated and surface cars are all practically at the door. Theatres and shopping districts also immediately at hand. *Personal baggage transferred free to and from New Pennsylvania station.*

Splendid Moorish dining rooms are but one of the many famous features of the New Annex.

**ABSOLUTELY FIREPROOF**

Rates.—\$1.50 Per Day, Upwards

**GEORGE F. HURLBERT, Pres. and Gen'l Mgr.**

Also The Greenhurst, on Lake Chautauqua,  
P. O. Greenhurst, Jamestown, N. Y. Open  
May 1st to Nov. 1st. 50 Automobile Stalls.

*Guide to New York (with Maps) and Special Rate Card—sent upon request.*



The cigaret  
that has  
made good  
on the broad-  
est claims  
ever made  
for anything  
to smoke—

## MAKAROFF RUSSIAN CIGARETS

15c  
And a  
Quarter

At  
Your  
Dealers

If you haven't seen the big  
dollar offer, write for it now.

*Makaroff - Boston*

Mail address—95 Milk Street, Boston

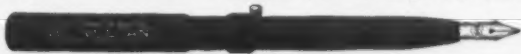
# HORLICK'S Malted Milk Lunch Tablets

A satisfying, convenient lunch, for travelers, business men and women.  
Just the thing for the emergency. For children, a wholesome substitute  
for candy. Have a package handy at home, in your desk, traveling bag or pocket.

Ask for "HORLICK'S," Original—Genuine. Druggists. Free Sample. Racine, Wis.

**"VULCAN" SELF-FILLING FOUNTAIN PEN**

\$2.00 with No. 2  
Gold Pen  
\$2.50 with No. 4  
Gold Pen



File and cleans itself with  
Simple Safety Device. Black  
Rubber, highly finished; fit-  
ted with 14-Karat Gold Pen.

J. ULLRICH & CO., 603 Thames Bldg., 135 Greenwich St., New York City



## For Liquor and Drug Using

A scientific remedy which has been  
skilfully and successfully administered by  
medical specialists for the past 30 years

AT THE FOLLOWING KEELEY INSTITUTES:

Hot Springs, Ark.  
Denver, Col.  
West Haven, Conn.  
Washington, D. C.  
Jacksonville, Fla.  
Athens, Ga.

Dwight, Ill.  
Marion, Ind.  
Lexington, Mass.  
Portland, Me.  
Grand Rapids, Mich.

Kansas City, Mo.  
St. Louis, Mo.  
3801 Locust St.  
Manchester, N. H.  
Buffalo, N. Y.

White Plains, N. Y.  
Columbus, O.  
Portland, Oregon.  
Philadelphia, Pa.  
819 N. Broad St.

Pittsburg, Pa.  
4346 Fifth Ave.  
Providence, R. I.  
Winnipeg, Manitoba.  
London, England.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

## Most Fitting Finale to the Festive Feast

# LIQUEUR PÈRES CHARTREUX

— GREEN AND YELLOW —

Serve the Daintiest Last

At first-class Wine Merchants, Grocers, Hotels, Cafés,  
Baker & Co., 45 Broadway, New York, N. Y.  
Sole Agents for United States.



## REDUCE YOUR FLESH

You can safely and speedily reduce your surplus flesh in any part of the body, and thus improve your figure, by wearing

**DR. WALTER'S**

### FAMOUS MEDICATED RUBBER GARMENTS FOR MEN AND WOMEN

They are very comfortable and never fail to accomplish the desired result. They are worn by the Royalty of Europe and the Society of America.

Neck and Chin Bands, as shown in cut, \$3.00  
Chin only . . . . . 2.00

Also union suits, jackets, stockings, etc. for the purpose of reducing the flesh anywhere desired. Invaluable to those suffering from rheumatism.

Write at once for further particulars.

**DR. JEANNE WALTER, Patentee**  
Suite 940, 45 W. 34th Street, New York  
San Francisco: 109 Geary Street



## Geisha Diamonds

THE LATEST SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY

Bright, sparkling, beautiful. For brilliancy they equal the genuine, standing all test and puzzle experts. One twentieth the expense. Sent free with privilege of examination. For particulars, prices, etc., address

**THE R. GREGG MFG. & IMPT. CO.**

Dept. G 517 Jackson Blvd., Chicago, Ill.

"AINSLEE'S MAGAZINE is becoming more popular with every issue. It presents fiction of a most entertaining nature—the kind which appeals to discriminating readers."—*Argus, Montpelier, Vt.*



YOU CAN MAKE CIGARETTES LIKE THESE

A Practical Novelty for Cigarette Smokers

One Complete Nickeled

## TURKO CIGARETTE ROLLER

Sent postpaid for 25cts. Address,

Turko Roller Co., 135 William St., New York

## CHIP, OF THE FLYING "U"

By B. M. BOWER

THIS tale is so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the living, breathing West, that the reader is likely to imagine that he himself is cantering over the grassy plains and imbibing the pure air of the prairie in company with Chip, Weary, Happy Jack and the other cowboys of the Flying U Ranch. The story is a comedy, but there are dramatic touches in it that will hold the reader breathless. **PRICE, \$1.25.**

**STREET & SMITH - Publishers - New York**



## CRESCA DELICACIES

Rich, unusual, tasty things from many foreign lands—completely described, with new recipes, in "Cresca Foreign Lanchons," our distinctive booklet illustrated in color, sent for 2c. stamp. Address **REISS & BRADY, Importers, 361 Greenwich St., N. Y.**



Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



# ELGIN WATCHES ON CREDIT

**17 Jewel Elgin—Our Great Special \$13.75**  
Sent Anywhere on FREE TRIAL

Guaranteed to keep accurate time. Fitted in double shock gold-filled case, warranted for 25 years.  
You do not pay one penny until you have seen and examined this High-Grade 17-Jewel Elgin Watch, in hand-engraved case, right in your own home. You are to be the Judge. Let us send it to you, all charges prepaid. If it suits you **PAY ONLY \$1.50 A MONTH.**

We trust every honest person. No matter how far away you live, or how small your salary or income, we will trust you for a high-grade Elgin Watch, in gold case, warranted for 25 years, and guaranteed to pass any Railroad inspection. Write for our big free Watch and Diamond Catalog. It tells all about our

**LOFTIS**  
**BROS. & CO.**

THE OLD RELIABLE ORIGINAL DIAMOND  
AND WATCH CREDIT HOUSE

Dept. K 29, 92 to 96 STATE ST., CHICAGO, ILL.  
Branches: Pittsburg, Pa., St. Louis, Mo.

Easy Payment Plan—the "Loftis System"—and how we send Elgin Illinois and Waltham Watches 16, 18, 22, and "O" sizes, 19, 21, and 25 Jewel, anywhere in the world, without security or one cent deposit. Send for the Loftis Magazine, Free.



## The Whittier Inn

Sea Gate—New York Harbor

### Your Own Summer Home

could afford no more privacy  
and exclusive luxury

The Inn is situated in a private park maintained by the local cottage community.

It accommodates 100 guests.

Rooms are available in nearby cottages to those who prefer them, service and privileges of the Inn being the same.

A clean broad beach with ample bathing facilities. Tennis, baseball, rowing and sailing.

Private boat service to New York City. Also frequent train service to Brooklyn.

Telephone.

Garage.

**A Delightful Place—Just 45  
Minutes from New York**

Rates and Booklet Upon Application.

TO BUY CHENEY SILKS IS TO  
SECURE THE VERY FINEST  
SILKS THE WORLD AFFORDS.  
TO IDENTIFY THEM, LOOK  
FOR THE NAME ON THE LABEL  
AND STAMPED ON THE END  
OF THE PIECE.

## CHENEY SILKS

CHENEY SILKS INCLUDE "SHOWER-  
PROOF" FOULARDS, FLORENTINES,  
DECORATIVE SILKS, UPHOLSTERY  
GOODS, VELOURS, VELVETS, RIBBONS  
CRAVATS, VELVET RIBBONS, SPUN  
SILK YARNS, REELED SILKS, ETC.

CHENEY BROTHERS, SILK MANUFACTURERS.

The Necco Seal  
on the box  
insures perfection.



# Lenox Chocolates

Here are chocolates with a difference. Not an ordinary one in the box. Each a palate charmer. Thickly covered with smooth, rich chocolate, daintily filled with fruits, cream, nougat, nut, caramel, jelly and other delicious flavors. Made in the largest confectionery factory in the world where cleanliness is one of the first considerations.

Sold by best dealers everywhere.

NEW ENGLAND CONFECTIONERY CO.,

Boston, Mass.

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."

## 20 ADDITIONAL PAGES 3 NEW DEPARTMENTS MORE SHORT STORIES

---

Beginning with the November number, SMITH'S MAGAZINE will contain twenty or more additional pages. There will be

AN ILLUSTRATED FASHION and ETIQUETTE DEPARTMENT conducted by Miss Anne Rittenhouse.

A BEAUTY and GENERAL HYGIENE DEPARTMENT under the direction of a specialist.

TALKS ON BOOKS THAT ARE WORTH WHILE by authorities on the subject, and in addition to these departments

AN EXTRA NUMBER OF ATTRACTIVE SHORT STORIES, by well-known authors.

All this will be in addition to the present magazine and will in no way interfere with the present number of stories that appear each month.

---

## SMITH'S MAGAZINE

BETTER

BRIGHTER

BIGGER

15 cents

*On all news stands on the 5th*



## One Telephone, Dumb; Five Million, Eloquent.

If there were only one telephone in the world it would be exhibited in a glass case as a curiosity.

Even in its simplest form telephone talk requires a second instrument with connecting wires and other accessories.

For real, useful telephone service, there must be a comprehensive system of lines, exchanges, switchboards and auxiliary equipment, with an army of attendants always on duty.

Connected with such a system a telephone instrument ceases to be a curiosity, but becomes part of the

great mechanism of universal communication.

To meet the manifold needs of telephone users the Bell System has been built, and today enables twenty-five million people to talk with one another, from five million telephones.

Such service cannot be rendered by any system which does not cover with its exchanges and connecting lines the whole country.

*The Bell System meets the needs of the whole public for a telephone service that is united, direct and universal.*

**AMERICAN TELEPHONE AND TELEGRAPH COMPANY  
AND ASSOCIATED COMPANIES**

Tell the substitutor: "No, thank you, I want what I asked for. Good-bye."



# Bon Ami

## Cleans, Scours, Polishes

Cleaning windows is an easy task with Bon Ami.

Cover the glass with a lather made by rubbing a wet cloth on the cake.

Let the lather dry. Then wipe it clean with a dry cloth.

Every particle of dust and dirt will disappear, leaving a clean, sparkling surface.

Nothing else equals Bon Ami for this purpose.

It is the same on brass and tin, mirrors and glassware, on floors and paint, on porcelain and oilcloth.

Bon Ami cleans, polishes and scours without scratching.

It never roughens the hands.

*18 years on the market  
"Hasn't scratched yet!"*



# Bake a Whole Swift's Premium Ham



—serve hot or cold. Enjoy its fine grained delicacy, mildness, extra quality and delicious taste.

Swift's Premium Bacon, sliced, in glass jars, is *all* bacon—no waste—every slice perfect and of uniform thinness.

*At all dealers*

"U. S. G. Inspected and Passed."

Swift & Company, U. S. A.

# Williams' Talc Powder



**T**HE old style talcum can with revolving top that often does not revolve, has been superseded by the more convenient one with a hinged cover that permits of free sifting of the powder, yet prevents leaking and escape of the perfume.

Such a can contains Williams' Talcum Powder, characterized by its great purity and fineness, its delicate, dainty, lasting perfume and its soothing, refreshing and antiseptic properties, perfectly fulfilling all the requirements of a toilet and face powder.

**A liberal sample  
in a miniature can  
for four cents**

For 4 cents in stamps you can get enough Williams' Talc Powder to give it a thorough trial. The sample cans are exact miniatures of the larger cans, and have the same convenient, non-leaking top. Specify which odor—Carnation or Violet.